The University of Chicago

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MEMPHIS TENNESSEE, 1848–1945

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF THE DIVISION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR
OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
1945

By
DAVID MOSS HILLIARD

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES . . . . . .

LIST OF FIGURES . . . . . .

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION 1

The Problem
Primary Sources
Secondary Sources

II. LEGAL BASIS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MEMPHIS 5

Legal Basis in City Ordinances from 1848 to 1856
First School Charter, 1856
Second School Charter, 1858
Third School Charter, 1866
Fourth School Charter, 1869
Changes in the 1869 Charter
Further Modifications of the 1869 Charter

III. THE STRUGGLE TO PROVIDE SCHOOL BUILDINGS 25

The Initial Period, 1848-1852
The Planning Period, 1852-1860
The Period of War and Reconstruction, 1860-1873
The Period of Depression, Yellow Fever and Bankruptcy, 1873-1883
The Period of the New City, 1883-1930
The Period of Final Victory, 1930-1944

IV. CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOL FINANCE 63

The Early Struggle to Establish an Adequate School Revenue--The Period, 1848-1869
Disaster and Survival--The Period, 1869-1889
The Convalescence Period, 1890-1900
Recovery--The Period, 1900-1920
Restoration--The Period, 1920-1944

V. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL CONTROL 97

Aldermanic Control
Officers of the Board
President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer

Chapter Page

V. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL CONTROL (Continued)

Standing Committees of the Board
Line and Staff Officers
The Superintendent
The Assistant Superintendent
The Principal
Supervisors

VI. PROVISIONS FOR THE PUBLIC EDUCATION OF NEGROES . . 132

Early Memphis a Cosmopolitan City
The Missionary Schools
Local Tax Supported Negro Education
Housing the Negro Pupils
Teachers for the Negro Schools
Secondary Education for the Negroes

VII. DEVELOPMENT OF GRADES, DEPARTMENTS, AND THE COURSE OF STUDY 152

Departmental and Grade Divisions
The Elementary School Course of Study
The Secondary School Course of Study

VIII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 174

The Transfer of the Management of the Schools from Political to Lay Control
The Transfer of the Management of the Schools from Lay to Professional Control
The Impact of the Social, Economic, and Political Forces at Different Periods on the Development of the Schools as a Local Social Institution

BIBLIOGRAPHY 189

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1.	Number of One-Room, One-Teacher Schools of Primary, Junior and Senior Grades Housed in Rented Buildings at Six Different Dates	28
2.	Per Cent of Current Expenses Spent for Rents and Repairs for Selected Years	40
3.	Cost of Lots Acquired and Buildings Erected from 1865 to 1873	46
4.	Permanent School Buildings Erected in Memphis Previous to 1900, Their Names, Date of Erection and Total Cost	51
5.	Permanent School Buildings Erected in Memphis between 1900 and 1905, Their Names, Date of Erection and Total Cost	56
6.	Permanent School Buildings Erected in Memphis between 1905 and 1910, Their Names, Date of Erection and Total Cost	57
7.	High School Buildings Erected and Acquired in Memphis between 1910 and 1920, Their Names, Date of Erection and Total Cost	59
8.	Schools Annexed from Shelby County, Most of Which Have Been Enlarged or Replaced, Their Names, Date of Erection and Total Cost	60
9.	Permanent School Buildings Erected (Other than High Schools) in Memphis from 1910 to 1932, Their Names, Date of Erection and Total Cost	60
10.	School Buildings Erected or Purchased in Memphis between 1930-1944	61
11.	Six Years of Itemized Annual Expenditures of the Board of Visitors in the Decade of the Fifties	65
12.	School Revenue Authorized by the Charter Contrasted with School Expenditures from 1857 to 1868	67
13.	The Tax Rates, Yield, Collections, and the Amounts Paid to the School Board by the City Council by Years from 1861 to 1867	69
14.	Income of Memphis Schools from Various Sources from 1869 to 1889	75

Table | Page

15. Itemized Expenditures of the Memphis Schools for Six Selected Years 77

16. Receipts and Expenditures of the Memphis City Schools from 1890 to 1900 79

17. Bonds Issued by the Memphis City Schools from 1889 to 1920, Their Purpose, Rate, and Method of Maintenance and Redemption 81

18. Current Receipts, Current Expenditures, and Surplus or Deficit for Memphis Schools, 1901 to 1920 83

19. Reductions Made in Operating Expenses by Budget Divisions between 1932 and 1937 93

20. Increases Made in Operating Expenses by Budget Divisions between 1937 and 1944 94

21. School Board Income, Expenditures, Balance and Transfers from 1933 to 1944 95

22. Per Cent of Public School Revenue Received from Various Sources from 1934 to 1944 96

23. Succession of School Board Presidents, Memphis City Schools 100

24. Succession of School Board Secretaries, Memphis Public Schools 103

25. Membership of Standing Committees, Memphis City Schools, 1913-1914 110

26. Succession of Superintendents, Memphis Public Schools 113

27. Succession of Assistant Superintendents, Memphis City Schools 118

28. Supervisors Employed by Memphis City Schools by Designated Periods 130

29. Per Cent Negroes in the Population by Decades . . . 145

30. White and Colored School Enrollments by Decades from 1860 to 1940 146

31. Number of Negro High School Graduates by Years . . . 150

32. Evolution of Departments and Grades, Memphis City Schools 156

33. Elementary Courses Taught at Eleven Selected Historical Dates 162

34. High School Subjects Offered at Six Selected Historical Dates 170

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure		Page
1.	Population Growth in Memphis Since 1830 by Decades	52
2.	Growth of Memphis in Area by Successive Annexations	53
3.	Taxable Values of Property in Memphis by Decades from 1850 to 1940	54
4.	Scholastic Population and Public School Enrollment in Memphis Since 1850	55
5.	Growth of High School Enrollment in Memphis by Decades Since 1870	58

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

The purpose of this study is to determine the major problems encountered by the citizens of Memphis in their century of effort to establish and to maintain a system of public education, and to show how the community solved these problems. Public education in Memphis encountered many difficulties in the course of its development. The explanation of these difficulties is embedded in the biographical history of the city. At successive periods, community development was retarded by municipal mismanagement, by military invasion, by epidemics of yellow fever, by municipal bankruptcy, by the influx of a proportionally large Negro population, by a continuing deficiency of public revenue, and by a period of rapid growth in population. Throughout the study an attempt is made to show how the changing conditions of community life were reflected in educational policy and practice. Special emphasis is given to the problems of school organization and administration.

The corporate existence of Memphis dates from 1826, and the beginning of free schools from 1848. Strategically located, the city became very early a trade and travel crossroad between the North and South, and between the North and Southwest. It quickly attained commercial importance which was virtually destroyed by the successive ravages of war and plague. Starting a second time, a new city arose out of the debris of the old city in 1880, and today it is again an important trade and commercial center of over 300,000 population. Whether in war, in pestilence, or in prosperity, the school system has been continuous and its history is an epic story in the struggle of an American community to persevere in the face of all adversities, and by its struggle to establish firmly a system of free education and to administer faithfully that system for the best interests of the community.

In order to make a careful analysis of the problems en-

countered and the methods of their solution, the study has been divided into six chapters exclusive of the two chapters entitled "Introduction" and "Summary and Conclusions." The following statements concerning each chapter reveal the scope of the investigation:

1. All legislative powers to establish and to regulate public education in Tennessee is vested by the constitution in the state legislature. Under this power the legislature may delegate specific responsibilities involving legislative action only to those arms of state government known as the county courts and the councils of municipal corporations. Administrative powers, however, to carry into execution the will of the legislature already expressed in law may be delegated to any agency or body already existing by law, or the legislature may create new agencies and clothe them with administrative powers to see that the purposes of the law are realized. Under successive changes in the statutes delegating powers to different agencies, the management of the schools of Memphis has passed from political control by the board of mayor and aldermen to lay control by a board of education, and finally to professional control by employees of the board of education. A study made of the laws granting these successions of power composes the subject matter of Chapter II.

2. To house the school population in properly constructed school buildings, owned by the board of education, has been a continuous problem for almost one hundred years and one of the greatest difficulty. Many interrelated social, economic, and political forces operated at successive periods to thwart the public desires and needs in erecting and owning these buildings. The schools during the first twenty years of their existence were housed in rented quarters, totally inadequate for the needs and purposes of the community. A lack of resources made necessary the construction of many cheap frame buildings. In order to show cause and effect relationships, explaining why the building program, and many other school needs, were so long delayed, this division of the study has had to treat with an immense amount of local history. All of these factors form the body of the material presented in Chapter III.

3. To procure the revenue with which to finance the school system has been another problem of serious magnitude. The power to levy a tax is, in Tennessee, a legislative act, and according

to supreme court decision, can be delegated to no agency except county courts and to chartered municipalities. Under this constitutional procedure the school board corporation has been designated the agency to administer the public schools, but to the city council has been delegated the authority to determine the amount of revenue the school corporation may have to discharge their duties to the community. The problem of finance for the first eighty years centers primarily around the efforts of the president of the board, the finance committee of the board, the superintendent, and sometimes interested individuals and civic organizations to represent the plea of the schools for an increased appropriation. The failures and successes to finance the schools under this dual system of control is studied in Chapter IV.

4. Various functionaries have been employed from time to time in the administration of the Memphis schools. Chapter V is a study of each of these functionaries and how their duties have been shifted from one to the other as new practices in school control have arisen.

5. The social reform following the Civil War forced the southern states into a policy of educating the Negro population at public expense. The State of Tennessee and the city of Memphis early initiated steps to carry into execution this new social reform, but by means of a dual system of schools. The procedures evolved historically during the past seventy-five years in the administration of the system of Negro schools in Memphis is considered in Chapter VI.

6. The main purpose of the schools is to educate the children of the community. This accomplishment is realized through the administration of the course of study. Chapter VII presents the innovations at successive periods which were introduced regarding departmental and grade divisions, subject matter, and teaching methods, in order better to adjust the training program to the pupils in a changing social order.

Primary Sources

A careful search has been made of every available source which could supply information for this study. The source materials used may be found in Memphis in the reference department of Cossitt Library, the archives of the municipal government, the Shelby County Law Library, and in the files of the city board of

education. Cossitt Library possesses a unique file of local newspapers. These have been thoroughly searched for school news from 1845 down to date. The abundance of school history contained therein is revealing. Cossitt Library also has preserved many publications of the city board of education, including several of the early annual reports and courses of study. These have been invaluable in making the investigation. The minutes of the city council, preserved in the city archives, afford the most important source of school history from 1848 to 1852. All state and municipal legislation affecting public education in Memphis is available in the Shelby County Law Library, and this library has provided the legal sources used. Although valuable historical information and documents are missing, the files of the board of education have preserved the board minutes since 1867, many of the annual reports, courses of study, attendance records, and financial statements. These have proved to be a storehouse of information.

Secondary Sources

The Biography of a River Town, Memphis: Its Historic Age (The University of North Carolina Press, 1939) by Gerald M. Capers, Jr., is a scholarly piece of research on the social, economic, and political history of Memphis from its earliest beginning down to 1900. The writer has leaned heavily on this work for interpretative background and has quoted it frequently.

J. M. Keating's History of Memphis (2 volumes; Syracuse, 1886. Volume II edited by O. F. Vedder) is a compilation of national, state, and local history, written by one who for several years was the editor of the Memphis Daily Appeal, and his chief source materials were newspaper files. A whole year may cover pages without a paragraph division. His only organization is chronological sequence. It is, says Capers, "an encyclopedia of the History of Memphis if used with discretion." It has been used for purposes of background, but is quoted sparingly.

J. P. Young's Standard History of Memphis (Knoxville, 1912), although better organized than Keating, exhibits few marks of careful investigation. Like the two preceding works it aids in affording the background for the interpretation of events affecting the historical development of the schools.

CHAPTER II

LEGAL BASIS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MEMPHIS

All powers, both legislative and administrative, to establish, to support, and to control public education are, by the Tennessee Constitution and by decisions of the Supreme Court of the state, vested in the state legislature. The legislative power over the schools is plenary. The legislature may do any and all things with the public schools which it deems proper, restrained only by the state constitution, the laws and treaties of the federal government, and the decisions of the United States Supreme Court. The state legislature may delegate its administrative powers over the schools to subsidiary branches of the government, or it may create new branches to carry into execution its will.

Except in a relatively few instances, local schools and local school systems were not conceived in the legislative mind and forced upon a reluctant local community, but on the contrary, the desire for the cultural advantages, flowing from a system of free schools, originated in the local community. Through local legislative delegations and frequently through committees of citizens, the legislature was petitioned that its power to establish and to maintain schools be delegated to some local agency, in order that through such agency, the local policy might be carried into execution.

The public schools of Memphis were early established in 1848 because the growing community itself realized the necessity of such an institution to its cultural development. Upon the petition of the local community, the legislature delegated to the board of mayor and aldermen the power to establish, to regulate, and to support a system of free schools. Local circumstances soon caused the community to desire a change in the aldermanic method of school control. Consequently, the law of 1856 transferred the management of the schools to an incorporated board of lay citizens. Many other legal enactments have altered, in the

course of time, the local pattern of school control, but always, except in a few instances, these changes have evolved out of the felt needs of the local community.

This division of the investigation attempts, through the study of state statutes and of city ordinances, to reveal the evolutionary stages in the development of public education in the city of Memphis.

Legal Basis in City Ordinances, 1848-1856

Both Vedder[1] and Young[2] assert that the board of mayor and aldermen had authority under the charter of 1826 to create a system of public schools. A search of the provisions of this charter and amendments thereto previous to 1848 discloses no specific statute conferring this authority. On January 21, 1848, however, the original charter of 1826, the amendments thereto between 1826 and 1848, and certain new provisions were all consolidated and issued as a new city charter.

One of the provisions of this new charter bestowed upon the board of mayor and aldermen the power "to establish a system of free schools for the white children,--to regulate the same,--and to create an annual fund not exceeding one-eighth part of the annual revenue of the city to be appropriated in the support of the same."[3] A few weeks later, the exact date is uncertain, free ward schools were made legal by city ordinance.[4] Under this ordinance, the aldermen from each ward could select the site, rent the building, and employ a teacher for the school of their ward. All such acts and disbursements of money must have the approval of the majority of the council. Accordingly, between January and June, 1848, four ward schools were opened, one in each of the

---

[1] O. F. Vedder, History of the City of Memphis and Shelby County, Tennessee: With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Citizens, II, 142. Syracuse, New York: D. Mason and Co., 1888.

[2] J. P. Young, Standard History of Memphis, Tennessee, p. 398. Knoxville, Tennessee: H. W. Crew and Co., 1912.

[3] Acts of the State of Tennessee, 1847-48, chap. 64, sec. 7, pp. 114-119.

[4] Minutes of the City Council (day and month uncertain), 1848.

four wards which at that time composed the city of Memphis.[1]

These ward schools during the six months of their existence experienced a perilous life. The minutes of the council relate differences over rents, salaries, assistant teachers, etc. Upon a motion to dispense with the services of Mr. Pearson, teacher of the third ward school, a committee of two aldermen, I. Wright and J. W. A. Pettit, was appointed to investigate this school.[2] One week later, each of these aldermen made separate reports which extended beyond the third ward school, and which recommended a new system of school control. Whereupon, the mayor appointed a committee to give careful study to a new system of administrative control and to report same to the council.[3] While this committee labored, public education hung by a thread in the council. In a council meeting of June 3, 1848, an amendment to a motion to reinstate Thomas I. Pearson as teacher of the third ward school was made, to the effect that the whole system of ward schools be discontinued. The indefinite postponement of this amendment was carried only by the deciding vote of the mayor, G. B. Locke.[4]

The Memphis public school system, in reality, dates from and finds its origin in the city ordinance of June 19, 1848.[5] In addition to I. Wright and J. W. A. Pettit, Eugene Magevney and G. B. Locke contributed materially to the framing of the ordinance which is quoted in its entirety.

Be it ordained by the board of mayor and aldermen of the city of Memphis:

> 1. That the city be divided into territorial units and bounded into school districts in such a manner as shall be most convenient having due regard to the present and future advantages and accommodations of each district.
>
> 2. That for the purpose of effectually supporting the common schools in the city of Memphis and securing the benefits and blessings of an education to all the white children therein, it shall be the duty of the council annually to levy and collect a tax amounting to one-eighth of the city revenue in conformity with the city charter to be exclusively appropriated to defray the expenses of the said schools and for no

---

[1] Vedder, op. cit., p. 143.

[2] Minutes of the City Council, May 13, 1848.

[3] Ibid., May 20, 1848. [4] Ibid., June 3, 1848.

[5] Ibid., June 19, 1848.

other purpose whatever, provided that the said schools in each scholastic district of the city shall at all times be equally free and accessible to all children between ages 6 and 16 years, who may reside therein, and subject only to such regulations for their government and instruction as the city council hereinafter may from time to time prescribe.

3. That all that part of Memphis lying north of Poplar Street, shall compose the first district and all that part of the city south of Poplar Street, the second district.

4. That the board of managers shall be elected by the mayor and aldermen in the month of June in each year to consist of the mayor and two aldermen, and two citizens, one to reside in the first district and one in the second district, a majority of whom to constitute a quorum.

5. That the board of managers shall provide schoolhouses of which there shall be two in each district, one to be used as a female school and one as a male school. That the board of managers shall employ school teachers and fix the rate of compensation and provide for the internal government of the schools.

6. That the only requisite for admission into the public schools shall be a residence in the city and be between the ages of 6 and 16 years.

7. That the board of managers shall report to the board of mayor and aldermen at least every quarter.

8. That the teachers of instruction in the schools shall keep a record of the names and ages of all persons by them respectively instructed and the time each shall have attended said school, and such record or copy thereof to the board of managers at the close of each current year they shall certify to the city council the correctness, a full account of the expenses incurred in support of said schools as also their fiscal condition and all other information in relation to them that may be deemed necessary by the council, which report shall be published.

9. That it shall be the duty of the mayor and aldermen to purchase, lease or rent such schoolhouses on such terms and conditions as they may think proper in the several school districts of the city and for such time as they may deem necessary.

Between the dates of June 19, 1848, the date of the ordinance creating the free school system, and September 1, 1848, the date of the annual opening of the free schools, the city council adopted several provisions which inaugurated definite administrative controls.

First, the board of managers was increased by adding one more alderman and one more citizen to the two aldermen and two citizens provided in the ordinance of June 19.[1] Mr. Magevney was appointed on the part of the council and Mr. Wilkerson on the part of the citizens.

Second, Mr. J. W. A. Pettit was appointed superintendent.[2]

---

[1] Ibid., July 1, 1848.

[2] Ibid.

Mr. Pettit was a prominent lawyer, a member of the board of aldermen, had been the outstanding proponent of free schools inside and outside the council, and has been designated by Keating as the Father of the Memphis free schools.

Third, by ordinance the board of managers was required to draw up and adopt rules and regulations and to submit the same to the council for approval, modification, or rejection.[1]

Fourth, the powers and duties of the superintendent were defined by ordinance.[2]

With the means of school administration legally established, the superintendent and the board of managers proceeded to arrange for the opening of free schools in Memphis in September, 1848.

The following three notices soon appeared in the public press:

> 1. Notice is hereby given, that in conformity with the city charter, the boards of managers and aldermen of Memphis have established a system of public schools within the limits of the city, which will go into operation by the first of September next. For the present the system extends only to the useful departments of an English education, and teachers eminently qualified to instruct in such branches of learning, and none others, will be presented to the acceptance of our citizens. Arrangements are in progress for the selection of suitable locations for the schools both male and female which when completed will be publicly announced.
>
> The object of this notice is chiefly to inform parents and guardians of the time when the schools will commence, as well as to assure them that each will be placed on a footing of respectability and utility inferior to none in this section of the country.[3]
>
> Signed, John W. A. Pettit
> Superintendent, Public Schools
>
> 2. The board of managers of the public schools of this city designs opening two male and two female schools in the city on the first Monday in September next, and will meet on Thursday, the twenty-fourth instant, at 10 o'clock A. M., at the Cumberland Presbyterian Church for the purpose of engaging teachers for the schools intended to be opened, in which all the common branches of an English education will be required to be taught. Salary of male teachers will be $600 and female $400.
>
> The following gentlemen compose the board of managers:

---

[1] Ibid., July 18, 1848.

[2] Ibid. These powers and duties are outlined on p. 108 infra.

[3] Memphis Daily Enquirer, Aug. 3, 1848.

G. B. Locke, Joseph Wright, Samuel Brown, Henry G. Smith, Eugene Magevney, and R. L. Kay. Applicants may address either of them and attend for examination at the time and place designated.[1]

G. B. Locke, President
Joseph Wright, Secretary

3. The public schools are now open and ready for the reception of pupils. The instructors are eminently qualified to discharge the duties they have assumed. The board of managers has made a fortunate selection of teachers, male and female, as regards moral character and qualifications. The schools, therefore, go into action under the most favorable auspices.

. . . . Tickets of admission must be obtained from the undersigned. This is an important law to guard against impositions. These tickets may be had at the schoolrooms, each of which I shall visit in the forenoon of each day.

The attention of our citizens is respectfully invited to this important subject, and their patronage and countenance earnestly invoked.[2]

Signed, J. W. A. Pettit, Superintendent

Those aldermen in the council, led apparently by Mr. Barry, who opposed free schools seem to have decided to control the schools since they had been frustrated in their effort to prevent them. In three council meetings during the month of October, 1848, several resolutions passed which altered the system of school control. The board of mayor and aldermen was made the sole board for controlling and conducting the city schools and the board of managers was discontinued.[3] All teacher contracts previously made by the board of managers were affirmed.[4] Soon the board of aldermen resolved:

1. That there be two free schools established, one located in the upper and the other in the lower part of the city, together with a third as near as practical to the center of the town. In the two schools in the upper and lower part of the town shall be taught all the branches of a liberal education embracing reading, writing, arithmetic, history, grammar, and geography. At the central school shall be taught the higher branches of a liberal education to be hereafter designated "the high school."

2. The aldermen in the first and second wards with one alderman from the third ward shall fix the upper location and the aldermen from the fourth and fifth wards with one alderman from the third ward shall fix the lower location. The high school shall be fixed by the whole board.

3. The aldermen having control of the special locations

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[1] Ibid., Aug. 23, 1848. [2] Ibid., Sept. 6, 1848.

[3] Minutes of the City Council, Oct. 7, 1848.

[4] Ibid., Oct. 14, 1848.

shall constitute a special board for the special supervision and care of the upper and lower schools.

4. Each special board shall be allowed a like sum for the purchase of grounds and the erection of buildings for the free schools in the upper and lower sections.

5. Full provision shall be made for the instruction and education of every child between the ages of 7 and 17.

6. In the event the school tax shall be found insufficient for this purpose, an appropriation shall be made out of the ordinary revenue of the city.

7. Each special board shall appoint the teachers of its respective schools and that the teachers now employed be continued so far as this shall comport with the public interest.

8. Colonel Pettit shall continue as superintendent, exercising the functions before conferred upon him and he shall continue the relations to each special board which he now does to the board of managers.

9. No special board shall purchase property without the approval and action of the board of aldermen.

10. No special board shall at any time spend money in excess of $200 beyond the school fund without special action and order of the board of aldermen.[1]

From this date forward until the school board received a charter in 1856, the mechanics of school control underwent several changes. At some council meeting before January, 1850, the minutes of which are not extant, the special boards of education were replaced by a committee on education, composed of aldermen appointed by the mayor. In September, 1852, an ordinance was passed authorizing the board of aldermen to appoint seven citizens from the city at large to act as a board of visitors to the schools. It should be the duty of these visitors to visit the schools as frequently as possible and together with the committee on education to make suggestions and recommendations to the council for the improvement of the schools.[2]

The circumstances which called these visitors into being may be seen from a study made in 1856. To quote:

> The year 1852 was the beginning of a new era in the city schools. . . . . The committee of aldermen on education found it difficult to give the subject that attention which its increasing importance required, and suitable arrangements for the opening of the schools at the usual time on the first of September, not having been made . . . . the people found themselves without schools. This condition of things led the aldermen to the adoption of a plan which had been urged upon them as essential to success, the appointment of a special board of citizens, to which the management of the schools should be entrusted. Seven citizens were then associated with the committee on education and the board thus formed was

---

[1] Ibid., Oct. 21, 1848. [2] Ibid., Sept. 11, 1852.

> denominated the board of school visitors. . . . . But this board of visitors only existed by a resolution of the board of aldermen, as a mere advisory body, without any absolute authority over the schools until the twenty-first of the succeeding December when it assumed a somewhat more distinct authoritative organization under a city ordinance.[1]

By virtue of the ordinance of December, just referred to, these seven visitors together with the committee on education became the governing body of the schools under the title, the board of visitors of the public schools of the city of Memphis. They were vested with powers "suitable and proper to enable them to fulfill the duties of organizing, sustaining, and governing the schools." Specifically, they held office for one year; were appointed by the mayor; could elect a president and secretary of their number; adopt by-laws for their own government and regulations concerning the schools, the superintendent, teachers, and officers; appoint and remove the same; keep a full record of their proceedings; and make a complete report to the council at the end of each session.[2]

Another reason for creating the board of visitors is recorded in the public press by R. D. Baugh, mayor in 1858. In discussing the legal difficulties attendant upon the purchase of lots and the erection of school buildings, he says in part:

> The languishing condition of our city schools might well have justified the opinion that a special board (such as the board of visitors was designed to be) would give more earnest attention to the subject than the board of aldermen, who had the multifarious interests of the city to legislate for, and hence the appointment of this school board to make the contracts for lots, leaving upon the aldermen the obligation to provide the necessary means for carrying out such contracts.[3]

Up to 1852 neither the board of aldermen nor the board of visitors had acquired by purchase or contract any school lots or buildings. To settle any legal doubt of their authority in this respect, local leaders procured a state enactment in 1852, to wit:

> Be it further enacted, that the mayor and aldermen of the city of Memphis are hereby authorized to assess and collect a special tax, upon such of the taxable property and privileges of the city as they may deem expedient and a poll tax

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[1] Memphis City Directory, 1856-57, pp. 11-17.

[2] Minutes of the City Council, Feb. 18, 1852.

[3] Memphis Daily Appeal, May 8, 1858.

upon all the rateable polls in the city; to raise a fund which shall be deemed sufficient, in addition to such funds as may be donated for the purpose, to purchase grounds and erect buildings, for the establishment of a system of free education in the city, not exceeding $30,000.[1]

During the first four years of school existence under almost exclusive aldermanic control, the council minutes reveal continual differences among aldermen in method of school control, employment of teachers, salaries paid, and almost every phase of school management. With the appointment, however, of seven school visitors to the school board, the council minutes reveal less time consumed in petty school matters, and these few handled with dispatch. The moving spirit in this board of visitors was Dr. A. P. Merrill, who was a visitor from 1852 to 1855, at which time he was elected superintendent. Merrill was a man of culture and education, of energy and vision, respected by all inside and outside of public office. In addition to his duties as a physician, he gave unselfishly of his talents to the advancement of public education for a decade in Memphis. As the board of visitors grew in power and favor, it was accordingly agreed by the local aldermen and legislators to incorporate this board and increase its usefulness.

All was not harmonious, however, between these two boards, and the clashes between them were contributing causes for their legal separation. The same writer for the city directory of 1856 states further:

> The board of mayor and aldermen with the view of coercing the board of visitors into the adoption of their views in regard to the hours of instruction, directed the mayor of the city, by a resolution, to withhold the payment of the expenses of the schools, including the salaries of all the teachers, which had the effect of impairing greatly the usefulness of the schools and to lessen the number of pupils in attendance, because of a want of confidence on the part of many of the parents in the continuance and stability of the system. The obnoxious order was finally rescinded and the expenses paid but not until the injury inflicted had made an impression, the injurious effects of which have not ceased to be felt in the schools, up to the present time.
>
> The frequent conflicts between the two boards of aldermen and visitors have long since convinced observing men of the necessity of an entire separation of them. The visitors, therefore, prepared a bill for the last legislature with a view to effect this desirable object, which was concurred in by the board and most of the aldermen. With some material

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[1] Acts of Tennessee, 1851-52, chap. 346, sec. 8, p. 633.

modification, this bill was passed into law. . . . .[1]

Thus, by the charter of 1856, the complete control and management of school affairs, except that of finance, passed from the hands of the aldermen into those of a lay board.

First School Charter, 1856

The essential features of the school charter of 1856, which was the first act of legalizing the school system as a political corporation, hereafter dependent upon state statute rather than city ordinance for its authority, are here selected and enumerated.[2] The board of visitors was empowered:

1. To choose one of their number as president.
2. To fill all vacancies in their number.
3. To employ and dismiss superintendents, teachers, agents, servants, etc.
4. To affix salaries.
5. To contract for schoolrooms, furniture, fuel, fixtures, apparatus, books, stationery, maps, globes, etc.
6. To adopt such rules and regulations as may be deemed best calculated to promote the welfare of the schools.
7. To appoint no one as superintendent or teacher until he or she, after a thorough examination, shall be declared competent and qualified to discharge the duties assigned.
8. To regulate the beginning and length of the school year and session.
9. To prescribe the courses of study, textbooks, and hours of tuition.
10. To make rules for the admission and expulsion of pupils.
11. To visit the schools at least once a month.
12. To make or cause to be made in their presence such examination of pupils as may enable them to judge of their progress.
13. To admit no one except white persons residing within the city limits between the ages of 6 and 20 years.
14. To prescribe higher branches of study than those usually taught in city schools.

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[1] Memphis City Directory, 1856-57, pp. 11-17.

[2] Public Acts of the State of Tennessee, 1857-58, chap. 170, pp. 400-402.

15. To continue as members of the board until their successors are legally appointed.
16. To return to the board of mayor and aldermen at the end of each scholastic year an annual report of the number of scholars male and female, the number within and without the city, the amount of tuition charged, the number of males and females in each branch of study, the textbooks used, the hours of tuition, the various items of expenses, and an estimated cost for the ensuing year.
17. To contract for lots and the erection of buildings thereon, provided the cost of the lots and buildings shall not exceed $50,000 payable in not less than three nor more than five annual installments, and the board of aldermen shall take such financial steps as are necessary to effect the objective desired.
18. To meet the current expenses of the schools the board of mayor and aldermen shall levy a tax upon such things as are now taxable for city purposes, the total amount of which shall not exceed a ratio of $15 for every white youth in the city, between 6 and 20 years of age, which tax shall be held sacred as a fund for the use of the city schools.
19. To be appointed annually by the mayor and the board of aldermen, one member from each ward and one from the city at large, and to be known as the board of school visitors.
20. To pay the expenses of the schools, all moneys paid out by the mayor and board of aldermen must be attested by the superintendent and countersigned by the president.
21. To admit children outside the city upon payment in advance to the city treasurer, of such tuition fees as prescribed by the board.

This charter of 1856 was shortlived, for in 1858 it was superseded by a new charter enacted by the state legislature. This charter transferred from the board of aldermen the right to appoint members to the board of school visitors, to the voting populace, who should elect them, one from each ward. At a later date the mayor charged that this charter was "smuggled through the legislature."[1]

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[1] Memphis Daily Bulletin, Sept. 1, 1863.

Second School Charter, 1858[1]

The main provisions of this charter are recorded by sections:

1. The board of visitors to have perpetual succession; to purchase, receive, hold, and possess property of any kind, in trust, for use of said schools; to make, have, and use a common seal; to do and execute all acts, matters, and things which a corporate or body politic in law may and can lawfully do and execute.

2. The board members shall be chosen in each ward (one from each ward) of the city by ballot on the first Saturday of June each year; there shall be a ten-day notice of election; the city marshal shall hold the election and appoint the judges; members shall hold office one year from the first of July after election.

3. The board shall choose a president from among their number; a secretary and a treasurer from within or without their body; the amount of the treasurer's bond to be determined by the board; all contracts, orders, drafts on school funds, notes, bonds, obligations, conveyances, transfers and other instruments of writing to be signed by the president after authorization by the board; the board to have power to employ and dismiss superintendent, teachers, agents, servants, etc., and to determine their compensation; to contract for schoolrooms, purchase furniture, fuel, fixtures, books, apparatus, stationery, maps, globes, and those things deemed necessary for proper instruction; to adopt rules and regulations for their own government and the government of the schools; to keep a full record of their proceedings; and to fill vacancies in their own body.

4. The board may admit only white pupils residing in the city; may charge tuition for those living outside the city and determine the amount of the tuition; may prescribe higher branches of study than those commonly taught and affix fees for them provided the school funds are insufficient.

5. All moneys accruing to those civil districts of Shelby County which embrace within their boundaries any portion of the city of Memphis shall be paid to the treasurer of the board of visitors in proportion to which those portions are entitled by their amount of scholastic population; the treasurer of the city of Memphis shall also pay over to the treasurer of the board of visitors all school moneys which shall be in his hands; in June of each year, the board must submit an estimate of expenses for the next ensuing year to the mayor and the board of aldermen; the mayor and the board of aldermen shall proceed to levy a tax upon such property as is taxed for other city purposes, not to exceed a ratio of $10 for every white youth in the city between ages of 8 and 16 years. This tax, called a school tax, shall be collected by the tax collector of the city and paid to the treasurer of the board of visitors as collected, subject only to the order of the said board.

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[1] Public Acts of Tennessee, 1857-58, chap. 170, pp. 400-402.

6. At the close of the school year in June, the board shall publish, for the information of their constituents, a report containing their principal doings, expenses for the year, and estimate of the expenses for the succeeding year.

7. All previous acts relating to the Memphis city schools are by this act repealed.

By 1858, ten years after the establishment of the schools their management had passed from political control by aldermen to lay control by a board of citizens, elected by popular vote. The charter of 1858 differed from that of 1856 chiefly in the following respects:

1. It provided that the visitors shall be elected by popular vote instead of being appointed by the council;
2. It reduced the amount of school revenue by providing a school tax equal to $10 for each white child within the city, of ages 8 to 16 inclusive, instead of a tax equal to $15 for each such child of ages 6 to 20 inclusive; and
3. It omitted entirely any reference to the power of the board of aldermen to levy a special tax for the purchase of lots and the erection of school buildings as contained in the special act of 1852 and the charter of 1856, an omission which caused serious legal embarrassments at a later date. This lay board was yet dependent upon the city council in one important respect. The council retained the function of levying, and collecting all moneys for school purposes. Notwithstanding these and all subsequent changes, this fiscal control has ever remained in the city council.

Several legal opinions were obtained which differed among themselves as to whether the board of aldermen under this charter of 1858 now had the power to levy a special tax for school buildings and real estate. Some maintained that the act of 1858 repealed all such legal power in this respect granted by the special act of 1852 and the charter of 1856; and that any such transactions had to be financed out of the ordinary revenue of $10 for each white child of ages 8 to 16 plus any other city funds the council would donate to this purpose.[1] Others maintained that the act of 1858 "nowhere alludes to the mode of raising money for purchasing schoolhouses; and, therefore, the repealing clause could not have been intended to apply to any previous act prescribing

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[1] Memphis Daily Appeal, May 1, 1858.

such mode."[1] This legislative ambiguity delayed for two years all efforts to acquire suitable building sites, at which time an amendment to the charter was obtained from the legislature as follows:

> 1. That the Act of March 1858 be so amended as to authorize the board of mayor and aldermen to levy annually a tax for city schools, not exceeding a ratio of $15 for every white child in the city between the ages of 6 and 18 years, instead of $10 between ages 8 and 16 years.
>
> 2. That the board of visitors shall have power to purchase lots and contracts for the erection of buildings thereon, provided the board of mayor and aldermen shall approve the same, provided the cost of the said buildings and lots shall not exceed $75,000, unless authorized to exceed that amount by a vote of the citizens at an election appointed for that purpose by the board of visitors. All contracts and purchases so made shall be binding on the mayor and aldermen who are hereby required to make immediate provision for the payment of same. To do so they have power to levy a special tax over and above the mentioned tax for the whole or a part of the cost. The mayor and aldermen may issue twenty-year, 10 per cent bonds for all or part of the cost. All money accruing from such tax and bonds shall be paid at once to the treasurer of the board of visitors, subject to the order of the said board.[2]

Under the authority of this charter of 1858 and its amendments, the board of visitors struggled through the lean years of the Civil War period. There were only eight wards in the city during this period and this small board of eight, one visitor from each ward, managed always to compromise differences, to adjust their diminished revenue to absolute necessities, and to keep the schools open.

A new charter, however, was applied for and received in May, 1866. The reasons for this new charter are not recorded, but may be perceived through deduction. By this date the board had evolved a pattern of administration which placed them directly in charge of school affairs, with little delegated to the superintendent and the secretary of the board. To manage such multifarious school affairs,there existed in 1865 four standing committees as follows:[3] Schoolhouses and Furniture, Teachers and Textbooks, Accounts, and Examinations. Each visitor necessarily

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[1] Ibid., May 8, 1858.

[2] Acts of Tennessee, 1859-60, chap. 142, secs. 1 and 2, pp. 450-451.

[3] The Fourteenth Annual Report of the Board of Education, Memphis City Schools, 1865-66, p. 3.

was a member of at least two standing committees. In addition, the charter imposed a duty on each visitor to visit the schools regularly. Business and professional men simply did not have the time to devote to this amount of school administration, hence, a demand arose to increase the number of board members.

Another reason may be found in the aftermath of the Civil War. The Federal forces having seized Memphis in 1862, the city soon became a haven for those still moving west and for those who followed the victorious army seeking new fields of employment or new places to try their fortune.[1] In the midst of war the population of Memphis doubled during the decade of 1860 to 1870. Many of these remained after the war to become prominent in the economic, political and social affairs of the municipality. To be in step with the time any change had its proponents. The schools being nearest to the people must be democratized by placing more citizens on the board.

Third School Charter, 1866

The charter of 1866[2] is quite a lengthy document of fourteen sections. It differs from the preceding charter with its amendments in only a few essential respects. It prescribes that there shall be two members from each ward elected by popular vote on the third Saturday in each June, to hold office for two years. At the first election, two shall be elected from each ward and by lot it shall be determined which of the two shall hold office for the long and the short term. At each annual election thereafter one shall be chosen from each ward for a two-year term. The board membership is now doubled from eight to sixteen members.

This charter empowered the board to judge of the disqualifications of its members, to punish members for disorderly conduct at the meetings of the board, or in the discharge of their duty, and to expel a member by a two-thirds vote.

No limit was placed on the amount of money which could be spent for lots and buildings. All acts of the board in this regard must have the approval of the board of mayor and aldermen

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[1] Gerald M. Capers, Jr., The Biography of a River Town, Memphis: Its Historic Age, p. 160. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1939.

[2] Acts of Tennessee, 1866-67, chap. 8, p. 15.

and the amounts so spent must have been approved by the citizens in an election called for this purpose.

Another addition was, that no officers of the city corporation nor of the County of Shelby, whether elected or appointed, were eligible for membership on the board of school visitors.

All other features of the charter are a regranting of powers bestowed in previous charters.

One marvels how this charter passed the legislature without providing free schools for Negroes. This same legislature of 1866, under the domination and control of Tennessee's Reconstruction Governor, William G. Brownlow, passed the Metropolitan Police Act which placed in the governor's hands power to appoint and control all police officers in Memphis, Nashville, and Chattanooga. This oversight was soon to be corrected.

This charter was shortlived for in 1869 the State Legislature enacted a new document. These two charters are the results of efforts to adjust school management to the stringencies of the postwar reformation.[1]

Fourth School Charter, 1869[2]

All powers and duties of the board contained in the previous charter and not here recorded are retained in the new charter. Only the new changes are here recorded:

1. The board is now called the board of education of the Memphis city schools.
2. The present board of visitors shall be the board of education until elections under this charter shall produce a new board.
3. Board members shall be elected upon the first Thursday in January of each year--one to be elected each year from each ward and to hold office for two years. The election date and place shall be the same as that for other city officers.
4. The new board shall meet and organize on the second Monday in January of each year instead of the first of July.
5. The board must present an estimate of expenses, for the coming year to the board of mayor and aldermen in December of each year, instead of in June.

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[1] Infra, p. 131.

[2] Acts of Tennessee, 1868-69, chap. 30, pp. 137-142.

6. The state superintendent can disburse no state school funds to Memphis until the said board has given the state its scholastic population census and has complied with all the other general school laws of the state.
7. The general school tax shall not exceed $10 for every youth between ages 6 to 20 years instead of $15 for every youth of ages 6 to 18 years.
8. The cost of school buildings and lots shall not exceed $50,000 per annum for a period of ten years, beginning in January, 1869. Such costs can exceed $50,000 only by a popular vote.
9. To meet the construction cost, the board of mayor and aldermen may levy a special tax for all or part of the cost and to finance part of the cost the city may issue bonds not to exceed $500,000 at 6 per cent for 30 years. The city is ordered to execute the financial arrangements when the board of education or an election, legally authorizes such building and purchases.
10. All moneys by tax or sale of bonds must be paid over to the treasurer of the board of education.
11. The board of mayor and aldermen must pay the semiannual interest on bonds and provide a sinking fund for the payment of the principal.
12. A board member must have lived in his ward twelve months prior to his election and his seat shall become vacant when he moves from his ward or from the city.
13. Separate schools shall be maintained for the white and colored, both systems of schools to be under the supervision of the board of education and its officers.

School administration in Memphis prevailed under the authority of this charter of 1869 and its subsequent amendments from that day to the present time. Those school executives who held office during the first fourteen years of the life of this charter worked during a time which was the most critical, contentious, and combative of any period in the educational history of the municipality.

As an aftermath of reconstruction, a non-tax-paying class of citizens could and did outvote the commercial and property-owning classes. Petty professional office holders used this vote to burden the city with debt to be paid, not by them, but by the

property classes. In funding the city debt in the late 60's, city bonds were sold at 21 cents on the dollar and again in the 70's at 60 cents on the dollar.[1] The tax rate reached 4 cents on the dollar in 1873. Business depression encompassed the city. Assessed valuations dropped from $30,000,000 in 1874 to $20,000,000 in 1878.

Mild epidemics of yellow fever had visited towns of the lower Mississippi Valley for decades. Memphis fell victim to its first devastating plague of yellow fever during the fall of 1873. An exodus of terrified people reduced the city from a population of 40,000 to 15,000. Soon, however, people returned and business life of the city was resumed under yet more pressing taxation difficulties and fearful feeling toward their future economic security.

What was perhaps the worst urban epidemic to ever occur in America, was the yellow fever scourge in Memphis in 1878, complete accounts of which must be found elsewhere. Suffice it here to say that the city was sheared of its credit, its populace, its civic leadership, and its self government. Political control of the city was placed in the hands of the governor and the legislature. The city became for a time after 1878 a taxing district of the state, the executive officers of which were commissioners, most of whom were appointed by the governor with the consent of the State Senate.

During this decade (1870-1880) of insolvency and disease, the board of education encountered attendant difficulties. The board now was composed of 20 members, was organized into several committees, and through them it undertook to manage the school in most of its minutest details under a rigid code of "rules and regulations." Quarrelsome relations developed between them and the city council. Although the charter of 1869 provided an adequate school revenue, the city council refunded to the board of education each year only a fractional part of this amount. School revenue diminished from $74,935 in 1873 to $31,434 in 1879. A school building program initiated in 1872 with promise suddenly stopped in 1873, not to be resumed for over ten years. Teachers went without pay for months and pay, when extended, was in the form of script or warrants worth often less than half of their

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[1]Capers, op. cit., pp. 201-202.

face value. School board records are replete with investigation of charges made against teachers, principals, and superintendents. The public press continuously waged a campaign against the board for useless expenditures, extravagant high schools, and favoritism in the employment of officers and teachers.

In order to bring to pass improved conditions in municipal affairs, the conservative or tax-paying classes organized themselves in support of the Memphis Cotton Exchange, The Chamber of Commerce, and The People's Protective Association. This last organization made an exhaustive investigation into all phases of the city government and city schools, condemned mismanagement, corruption, and unnecessary expenditures, and recommended drastic fiscal retrenchment and change in city and school charters. The utter bankruptcy after the epidemic of 1878 forced upon a reluctant electorate many of the drastic changes which this group of realists had formerly advocated.

In building a new city on the basis of the old, the commissioners, between 1879 and 1883, had wrought astounding results. It followed, naturally, that the city schools should emulate this example and discard its twenty-member board with its wrangling committee organization. Accordingly, a modified legal instrument of school control came into existence in 1883.

A committee of the board, commissioned to bring in a report on needed changes in the charter, made a report in December, 1882. Among other changes this committee recommended: "A five-member board, each member to be elected from the city as a whole rather than from a ward, and that members be paid a salary."[1] All of these recommendations appear in the new law. The legislative act of 1883 was not specifically an amendment to the charter of 1869, for it applied to all taxing districts. Since there was only one such taxing district in the state, the act was in reality an amendment to the existing school charter.

Changes in the 1869 Charter[2]

By the provisions of the act of 1883 the following changes were brought to pass:

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[1] Minutes of the School Board, Dec. 28, 1882.

[2] Acts of the State of Tennessee, 1883, chap. 17, pp. 20-22.

1. Five school commissioners elected by popular vote from the city at large replaced the two members formerly elected from each ward.
2. The governor was empowered to appoint these five commissioners to serve until the designated date of the first election.
3. The board and all of its officers and teachers were abolished from the date of the act, thus granting to the new board the privilege of immediately appointing all of its officers and agents.
4. No superintendent could be appointed from among the board membership.
5. All other powers and duties bestowed and enumerated by the charter of 1869 were retained by the new board.

Further Modifications of the 1869 Charter

Since 1889, many amendments have been added to the basic charter legalizing the issuance of bonds with which to purchase real estate and to erect schoolhouses and to designate the condition of sale, the amount of interest, and the method of redemption of such bonds.[1] Certain amendments have also been added changing the remuneration of officers of the board having legal status; but in only one particular has the organic structure of control been changed. In 1941 the president of the board was made a full time officer possessing a status and salary comparabl with that of the superintendent. His appointment is by the city commission, and his four-year term of office coincides with that of the other four members of the board of education who remain elected from the city at large by popular vote.[2] The obvious purpose and intent of this amendment was to give to the city commission the power to make the president of the board the fiscal agent of the city government, to handle all financial affairs of the schools. Under this arrangement the schools are perhaps headed toward a bi-lateral management. The fiscal affairs are under the administration of the president, while that of instruction is under the supervision of the superintendent.

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[1] Infra, p. 80.

[2] Private Acts of Tennessee, 1941, chap. 42, pp. 164-166.

CHAPTER III

THE STRUGGLE TO PROVIDE SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The efforts of the community to purchase lots and to erect school buildings is a story as old as the system itself. In each period, school leaders, city officials, and interested citizens had plans for school buildings, which would not only serve community needs but would be an ornament to the city as well. The ability of the community to possess school buildings depended upon the amount of wealth available in the form of taxes.

Thwarting forces constantly operated to make unavailable the financial means of erecting the needed buildings. The general apathy of the people, especially those in high office, had to be contended with. All available taxes must first go into street pavings, highways, wharfs, bridges, sewers, water systems, railroad stocks and many other "more pressing needs" than schools. The ravages and reconstruction of a civil war must be paid for. Worse than all, the town had to combat before the days of science, the ravages of smallpox, cholera, and yellow fever.

This section traces the efforts of school executives to provide in each succeeding decade the school houses deemed necessary in the light of their educational needs and presents the social and economic handicaps against which they constantly contended.

The Initial Period, 1848-1852

The first free schools in Memphis were strictly ward schools. By virtue of the ordinance passed January 21, 1848,[1] the aldermen of each ward were empowered to rent quarters, employ the teacher, and in general operate the ward school, all such acts to have the approval of the council. A ward school arose in each of the four wards that composed the corporation. These

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[1] Minutes of the City Council, Jan. 21, 1848.

schools were one-room, one-teacher, and ungraded schools. This early school seems to have set a pattern in the minds of many patrons and city officials against which school executives had to contend for a score of years thereafter.

From September, 1848, to September, 1852, the schools were controlled by a board of managers appointed from among the aldermen by the mayor. This board employed a superintendent, who during these four years was J. W. A. Pettit. The superintendent made all recommendations to the board of managers who in turn were dependent upon the council. These four years of aldermanic administration under Superintendent Pettit insisted upon sex segregation and followed ward locations only secondarily. Their design to open two male and two female schools in September, 1848, was so stated in the public press.[1] When schools were opened this design was fulfilled but the one room school in the case of girls was slightly modified. "The schools are now open and . . . Mr. P. J. Carroll takes charge of the male school over the Market House, Mr. J. M. King opens in the second story of the engine house on Poplar Street, Mrs. Barnett and Miss Cochran have charge of the Female Academy on Poplar Street."[2]

These one-room, ungraded, and sex-segregated schools continued through the four years of Pettit's administration, for pupils 6 to 17 were admitted to the following schools, four of which were for boys and the other four for girls, in September, 1851: "Mr. B. Sawtell, at the new brick building on Main Street near Market, Mr. J. Bell at the brick academy on Court Street, Mr. J. Lewis at the South Memphis Market House, Mr. G. K. Fisher at the schoolhouse on Hernando Street, Mrs. Irvin at the female academy on Poplar Street, Mrs. Sappington at the schoolhouse on Madison Street, Mrs. Creighton near the Second Presbyterian Church, and Miss Creighton at the brick apartment on Hernando Street."[3]

During these four years, no record is found that either a school or a governmental official advocated the purchase of any real estate or the erection of school buildings. No doubt many visionary citizens planned for city-owned and properly constructed

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[1] Memphis Daily Enquirer, Aug. 23, 1848.

[2] Ibid., Sept. 6, 1848.

[3] Memphis Daily Appeal, Aug. 23, 1851.

school buildings, for the public press in September, 1848, records three articles by a citizen, George P. Cooper, describing in detail the benefits of adequate grounds, schoolhouses, furniture, equipment, and apparatus.[1] During the four-year period under consideration, however, both citizens and officials were resigned to the necessity of submitting to nothing more than rented quarters.

The Planning Period, 1852-1860

The first effort in gradation of the schools appeared in September, 1852, with the advent of the second superintendent, Dr. Ebbert. The schools opened that year with twelve one-room schools, taught by as many teachers, and all were in rented properties. There were six primary schools, three for boys and three for girls; four junior schools, two for boys and two for girls; and two senior schools, one for boys and one for girls.[2] These twelve schools were scattered over town as consistent with ward organization as was feasible to acquire rented buildings. These three divisions of primary, junior, and senior departments continued until 1866.[3] The only apparent variations from these divisions of one-room, one-teacher schools, housed in rented quarters were: occasionally both sexes attended a common school where the school population was too scarce to afford two separate schools, locations shifted each year, and more than one school frequently was housed in the same building. The number of schools increased to twenty-four in 1865.[4]

It should not be inferred that the school authorities were content to endure rented quarters for so long a time. On the contrary, from 1852, when by ordinance[5] the first seven visitors were added to the board of managers, an agitation by school executives was started and thereafter never ceased. The superintendent in 1854 says, "when Memphis shall be provided with

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[1] Enquirer, op. cit., Sept. 10, 1848, Sept. 13, 1848, and Sept. 16, 1848.

[2] Appeal, op. cit., Sept. 28, 1852.

[3] Memphis Daily Argus, Sept. 1, 1866.

[4] Ibid., Aug. 24, 1865.

[5] Minutes of the City Council, Sept. 11, 1852.

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF ONE-ROOM, ONE-TEACHER SCHOOLS OF PRIMARY, JUNIOR, AND SENIOR GRADES HOUSED IN RENTED BUILDINGS AT SIX DIFFERENT DATES

School Year	Number of Primary Schools	Number of Junior Schools	Number of Senior Schools	Total
1852[a].....	6	4	2	12
1857[b].....	12	8	2	22
1858[c].....	12	6	2	20
1859[d].....	14	5	2	21
1863[e].....	10	7	2	19
1865[f].....	15	7	2	24

[a]Memphis Daily Appeal, Sept. 28, 1852.

[b]Memphis Evening Ledger, Oct. 16, 1857.

[c]Memphis Daily Appeal, Sept. 7, 1858.

[d]Ibid., Sept. 3, 1859.

[e]Memphis Daily Bulletin, Sept. 6, 1863.

[f]Memphis Daily Argus, Aug. 24, 1865.

suitable school buildings this city may boast of as good schools as can be found in the country."[1] Further, the chairman of the board at the same time declared,

> In our last annual report some remarks were made on the importance of erecting suitable buildings for the accommodation of these schools. The experience of the past year has fully confirmed the views there taken; and the more, as the great increase in the number of pupils renders it quite impossible to provide schoolrooms which are either convenient or comfortable, while they are necessarily so detached and scattered over the city as to interfere materially with good superintendency and successful teaching. Few improvements are more important to the welfare and prosperity of the city, and none, it is believed, would commend more general approbation.[2]

Beginning in 1852 the board of visitors was required to

[1]Second Annual Report of the Board of School Visitors, Memphis City Schools, 1853-54, p. 8.

[2]Ibid., p. 4.

make an annual report to the council at the end of each session.[1] Of the eight annual reports published between 1852 and 1860, five are extant and in each of these five reports the practice of renting school properties is impeached upon these bases:

1. Poor ventilation and poor lighting.
2. Rooms in most cases are too small for the number of pupils and overcrowding is common and stultifying.
3. Irregular attendance results from such unattractive and unhygienic conditions. Inferior teaching and poor discipline is the result.
4. Inefficient superintendency results from so numerous and so scattered schoolrooms.
5. No modern methods of classification of pupils can mature.
6. The constant repair, remodeling, and restoration makes them more expensive than ownership.
7. The by-products of education are defeated by such pauper-like schools.

Not only were the school officials discontented with rented quarters, but they planned a far-sighted building program during this period. At this time the municipality was restricted to the bluff area, bounded by Wolf River on the north, Gayoso bayou on the east. The southern boundary was about where Iowa Street now is, and the western boundary was the Mississippi River.

In this area extending about 2 miles from north to south, it was planned to erect

> . . . . three buildings, one central and one in each of the northern and southern divisions. . . . . The central building should be constructed so as to accommodate chiefly the senior and junior schools, and, if deemed expedient from its location, a portion of the primary, and upon a scale commensurate with all the purposes of a complete education, embracing rooms for a library, chemical and philosophical apparatus, and public lectures and examinations.[2]

This plan of three large, commodious brick school buildings appears many times in the records and seems to have been generally acceptable to the public and city officials, as well as to the school executives. It had its origin in an ordinance of 1848

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[1] Minutes of the City Council, Feb. 18, 1852.

[2] Fifth Annual Report of the Board of School Visitors, of the Memphis City Schools, 1856-57, p. 8.

which for a time created three special boards to manage the schools.[1] That ordinance provided for three schools, the northern and southern schools to teach the branches of a liberal education, but the central school to be a high school. The plan after being advocated for twenty-four years was partially realized when in 1872 and 1873, Market Street school (now Christine) was opened in the north section, and Peabody School (now Kortrecht) was opened in the south section. The growth of the city and other factors rendered the central school impractical.

To be fortified in their struggle with the city council for funds with which to purchase real estate and erect school buildings, the board of visitors enlisted the aid of the state legislature. Under the authority of the act of 1852,[2] the board of mayor and aldermen was empowered to assess a special tax with which to purchase grounds and erect buildings. Again, in the first charter of 1856[3] incorporating the board of visitors, the visitors could contract for lots and buildings and the board of aldermen should take steps to consummate the plans of the visitors.

With this legal support, the board of visitors launched their program of school housing. A building committee was appointed to survey the various eligible sites.

Many such sites were tentatively selected and a contract was drawn for a lot at the corner of Monroe and Wellington on which to locate the Central School.[4] This site evidently had many advantages. It was east of the bayou, the direction in which the city must thereafter expand; it was centrally located in relation to the north and south extremities of the town; it was on a high eminence overlooking the bluffs across and beyond the bayou; and, although adjacent to the business and residential districts, it was sufficiently removed from the noise and bustle of the rapidly growing city.

It was further planned that the building and grounds com-

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[1] Minutes of the City Council, Oct. 21, 1848.

[2] Acts of Tennessee, 1851-52, chap. 346, sec. 8, p. 633.

[3] Public Acts of the State of Tennessee, 1856-57, pp. 11-17.

[4] Fourth Annual Report of the Board of School Visitors of the Memphis City Schools, 1855-56, p. 8.

mittee should from year to year purchase lots in anticipation of future growth on which to locate "auxiliary schools (to the north, south, and central schools already planned) and these may be established as the further expenditure of money for such purposes can be afforded."[1]

The actions of the building committee were submitted to the board of mayor and aldermen. Although records are fragmentary, some potent arguments doubtless employed are preserved:

> The amount we pay for leased lots and houses, and the repairings necessary every year to keep old shanties in a somewhat acceptable condition, will more than pay the interest on the amount necessary to purchase ample accommodations for every child in the city.[2]

> Our schools, generally speaking, contain an average of about 50 pupils each. . . . . This makes it necessary to provide rooms of much larger size than is to be met with in houses built for family use. For a majority of the schools, however, such houses have to be used, for want of others, and they can only be made to answer the purpose by removing partitions, so as to throw two or more rooms into one; the expense of which, together with the cost of restoring these houses to their original form, has to be paid, in addition to the nominal rent. Of course, we cannot expect anything but cheap and common tenements to be thus treated. Some, indeed, are too cheap and common and too much dilapidated to be comfortable, healthful, or even decent; and many of the youths of our city are assembled daily in a schoolroom as no human beings in such numbers should be allowed to inhabit. . . . . The custom of bringing pupils for school exercises into rooms which are so far inferior in points of cleanliness, ventilation, comfort, and even decency, to their own homes, must have entirely the opposite effect to those refining influences which should accompany all schools. . . . .
>
> The increase of expense in the two items of rent and repairs--together with inferior accommodations--must continue until we shall have provided schoolrooms of our own.[3]

> Lots which could have been purchased a year ago for $13,000 could not now be bought for $20,000. The folly of delay is thus made most palpable.[4]

> Money has been lavishly spent in every way--but not a word for the system of instruction. There have always been complaints against the mayor and board of aldermen that they were hostile to the schools. . . . . It really does seem a singular circumstance that facilities are so good for contracts in everything except schoolhouses. . . . . Possibly

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[1] Fifth Annual Report, op. cit., 1856-57, p. 8.

[2] Fourteenth Annual Report, 1865-66, p. 10.

[3] Fourth Annual Report, op. cit., 1855-56, p. 10.

[4] Fifth Annual Report, op. cit., 1856-57, p. 8.

> they may have doubts regarding our capacity to let out the contracts to the best advantage.[1]

Rented buildings could not much longer even house the school population. Population increase in Memphis was as follows: in 1850, 8,841; in 1860, 22,623; and in 1870, 40,226.[2] The scholastic population increased from 2,000 in 1855 to 3,568 in 1860, and to 10,667 in 1870.[3] Actual public school enrollments were: in 1850, 540; in 1860,[4] 1,692; and in 1870, 3,307.[5]

Support, neither financial nor moral, was ever forthcoming during these early years from the mayor and board of aldermen who in law held completely the purse strings. History may account for, but not justify, this neglect. In the young town, feeling the importance of its future greatness, so many enterprises forced their demands upon the taxable revenue that a selection had to be made among them. The future depended upon trade and industry. Trade and industry in turn depended upon boats, wharfs, streets, highways, railroads, bridges, banking, and politics. Trade and industry must first be served, education, public health, sewers, and a water system must be patient and abide their time,--a most grievous blunder soon to be realized.

The most satisfactory answer to the question--why could not the board of visitors succeed in initiating a building program--is found in the affairs of the municipal government, especially that of finance. The mayor of the young town of 3,500 people in 1845 announced that the city was out of debt, and that the revenue had increased forty per cent per annum for the past four years.[6] The school system inaugurated only three years later had reason to expect from the future, adequate financial support. Such did not prove to be the case.

The insatiable demand for street pavings was a constant

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[1] Fifteenth Annual Report, of the Board of School Visitors, Memphis City Schools, 1866-67, pp. 54, 55.

[2] Capers, op. cit., p. 125.

[3] Annual Report of the Board of Education, Memphis City Schools, 1883-84, p. 20.

[4] Appeal, op. cit., July 10, 1851.

[5] Annual Report, op. cit., 1883-84.

[6] Young, op. cit., p. 87.

drain on the city treasury for decades. The soil composition of the bluff region, like that of the plateau composing West Tennessee, is of sedimentary deposit. The surface is a deep layer of clay superimposed on sand and sedimentary rock. Gravel, being near at hand in the river beaches and old beds, was used for paving. Soon after being applied to the streets' surface, it disappeared into the soft clay beneath, under the constant pressure and pounding by the wheels of wagons and drays heavily laden with bales of cotton and the other articles of a river port town. Two years after the application of one layer of gravel, the streets again contained, during the wet season, mud holes so deep that frequently beasts, wagons, and even human beings had to be extricated from the mire. Between 1845 and 1860, this process of regraveling the streets, in spite of engineers' advice to the contrary, was repeated more than a half dozen times and by 1860 the city had spent approximately $1,000,000 on this single improvement and had nothing but the same impassable streets to show for it.[1]

A second public enterprise which held front rank in the public mind was railroads. Memphis was conscious of its importance as a transportation center. The number of bales of cotton passing through its warehouses in 1840 was 35,000 bales valued at $1,400,000. This item increased in 1860 to 360,653 bales valued at $18,500,000. The value of the total amount of trade in 1860 was $51,500,000.[2] Memphis during the decades of the 40's and 50's was rapidly become a trade depot between the extensive and expanding hinterland of its location and the markets of the North, the East, and those of Europe. Besides an indeterminate amount spent on wharfs, and plank roads radiating from Memphis, the city government by 1860 subscribed over $1,000,000 to the stocks of different railroads to the north, east, south, and west of Memphis.[3] May, 1857, produced "the greatest demonstration of public joy ever witnessed in the Mississippi Valley" when more than 25,000 people participated in the celebration at Memphis of the completion of the Memphis-Charleston railroad, the road which linked together "that ancient and chivalrous city of Charleston

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[1] Capers, op. cit., pp. 127-128. [2] Ibid., pp. 78-79.

[3] Ibid., p. 128.

on the sounding shores of the Atlantic with the growing young city--the village of yesterday--seated on the last of the Chickasaw bluffs, which nature herself erected as a throne of the southwest commerce upon the brow of whose regal occupant her richest and most radiant jewels are destined to shine."[1]

A third factor in city government which operated against the building program of the board of visitors was the inexcusable inefficiency, if not corruption, of the city government in the administration of municipal affairs. The continued use of gravel on the city streets in opposition to experience and to the advice of engineers makes it difficult, says Capers, "to avoid the suspicion that for years the officials had been in league with local gravel contractors."[2] The meetings of the council

> . . . . consumed hours upon hours, the longest discussions being upon the subjects of the least importance. Some of the members were garrulous--and these not only consumed the time but often compelled obedience by the rest to their dicta and in some cases frightened good men into resigning.[3]

At one meeting, the council refused to authorize the building of an engine house because of a lack of funds, yet raised the city attorney's salary $1,500, and at the same time hired another lawyer for $1,000 to revise the city ordinance, a duty belonging to the city attorney.[4] For the officials to sell horses, fattened at public expense, was common.[5] One alderman resigned in 1859 "on account of the financial mismanagement of public affairs and the time taken up in useless debate and mere talk."[6] The public press charged, "not a single one of them seemed to know how much was spent, borrowed, or received,--."[7] Alderman Erwin, who had a reputation as a public official for deliberation and independence and who was inclined to occupy little time in the council at speaking, declared that he was "opposed to building schoolhouses--he believed the present system of locating schools in a room here and there where they can be obtained, the best."[8] Before this legislative body in the 50's, the school buildings came in for

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[1]Keating, op. cit., p. 389.

[2]Capers, op. cit., p. 128.

[3]Keating, op. cit., p. 412.

[4]Ibid., p. 413.

[5]Capers, op. cit., p. 129.

[6]Keating, op. cit., p. 435.

[7]Ibid., p. 415.

[8]Appeal, op. cit., Apr. 22, 1858.

much discussion but for them the cupboard was always bare. In similar manner, other public enterprises were postponed. Mild epidemics of smallpox, cholera, and yellow fever caused the board of health, the public press, and physicians to advocate a systematic cleaning of streets, alleys, and bayous, a sewer system, and a water system. Aldermen pushed them aside with the same inconsideration attendant upon the schools. What a price this indifference, ignorance, and folly later cost!

The schoolhouse planning program met a fourth major difficulty, that of a legal snarl. Under the special statute of 1852 the council was charged to raise an education tax not to exceed $10 for each white child between the ages of 6 to 17 inclusive, and,in addition,to levy a special tax for the purchase of lots and the erection of buildings not to exceed $30,000. The charter of 1856 was more generous in respect to both of these provisions. To maintain the schools, an education tax of $15 for each white child between ages 6 and 20 should be levied and,in addition,a special school building tax of $50,000, the board of visitors to have contractual power in relation to lots and buildings. The second charter of 1858 reduced the amount of education tax to $10 on all white children, ages 8 to 16, and after conferring on the visitors power to have and to hold real estate it omitted altogether the bestowal of power to the board of mayor and aldermen to enforce a special tax for school building purposes. Furthermore, the last section of this charter repealed all previous acts pertaining to the Memphis public schools. The act of 1858 purposely reduced the regular school revenue by one-half, and if the facts could be ascertained it would not be surprising to learn that the building fund tax was willfully omitted. As a consequence, when in May, 1858, Mayor Baugh appointed a committee of aldermen to collaborate with a committee of school visitors to consummate contracts for the purchase of school lots, the whole affair became involved in a legal wrangle over the power of the aldermen to spend money for such a purpose.[1]

This period came to a close by the visitors scoring at least a legal victory over the aldermen. The legislature in March, 1860, amended the charter of 1858. The amount of the annual education tax was increased from $10 for each white child,

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[1] Ibid., May 1, 1858, and May 8, 1858.

from ages 8 to 16 to $15 for each white child, ages 6 to 18. This plan would augment the annual revenue about 40 per cent. The city fathers were further required to provide the visitors with $75,000 for building purposes either by means of a special tax or bond issue. The school visitors could increase the amount of $75,000 by a special election authorized by themselves.[1] These amendments were secured probably in opposition to the city officials, for the Appeal believed "the bill was drafted under the eye of Superintendent Pope, and other enlightened friends of our school system."[2]

The Period of War and Reconstruction, 1860-1873

At the very time when the Appeal, a staunch friend of public schools and an advocate of commodious school buildings, observed, "that at the present moment many are awakening to the necessity of a liberal and efficient system of public schools . . . . ,"[3] and was demanding, "let us have school houses,"[4] the country was plunged into Civil War

Mayor Park addressed the council and called into question "the advisability and propriety of continuing the free school system while the war lasts,"[5] and on the following day the council appointed a committee to confer with the school visitors on the subject of suspension.[6] Better judgments, however, prevailed. The public press appealed to the aldermen to keep the schools open and to the visitors to economize and suspend their building program. A compromise plan seems to have prevailed. The school tax was stricken from the list of taxes, but the schools would continue operation provided they reduced their expenditures by $12,000 or about 40 per cent.[7] The expenditures of the schools

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[1] Public Acts of the State of Tennessee, 1859-60, chap. 142, p. 450.

[2] Memphis Daily Appeal, Mar. 28, 1860.

[3] Ibid., Feb. 8, 1861. [4] Ibid.

[5] Avalanche, op. cit., July 5, 1861.

[6] Appeal, op. cit., July 6, 1861.

[7] Keating, op. cit., p. 503.

were reduced about $10,000 in 1861-1862 and remained approximately so until 1864-1865.[1] The superintendent, addressing the board after the close of the war said, "At the time of your installation into office . . . . the prospect was the most gloomy that any board of school visitors ever encountered, but by energy, and a reduction of expenses, and the cooperation of the city government, you have been enabled to maintain, under all your difficulties, the system of public instruction. . . . ."[2] Naturally the agitation for school buildings ceased for the duration.

The period following the war presented many vexing social problems. The population, which had increased from 22,623 in 1860 to 40,226 in 1870, had become heterogeneous. Whereas, formerly there were only about 3,000 Negroes in Memphis, the number now had enlarged to 15,000. These ex-slaves and descendants of slaves, transferred from an agrarian to an urban existence, placed an undigested "body in the city's craw." Memphis being one of the sub-districts of the Freedmen's Bureau, a large body of federal officials and their agents, mostly carpetbaggers, remained in the city. This necessitated a large garrison of federal troops composed for the most part of Negro soldiers. This body of agents and troops was in frequent clash with the municipal police. Upon one occasion in May, 1865, mob law prevailed for three days when the police became embroiled with some drunken Negro soldiers, recently discharged from the army post. Furthermore, the local business men of 1860 persisted in the continuation of trade with the confederacy and those supporting it, and were by the occupying army of 1862, 1863, and 1864 either driven to an opposite course or out of business. Their places were resumed by a type of business man, in general, hostile to many schemes of postwar adjustment made by original native sons. To work out the destiny of the municipality with these unamalgamated and divergent elements of ex-confederates, Negroes, and newcomers to the community, defied the human and social intelligence of that day, and militated adversely against the future development of the free schools.

Economically, the bluff city suffered the fate of a van-

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[1] Annual Report, 1883-84, op. cit., p. 20.

[2] Fourteenth Annual Report, 1865-66, op. cit., p. 14.

quished people. With its wholesale trade with the surrounding region destroyed, with war prices still prevalent, with its railroads, financed at such sacrifice, in a broken and depleted state, with its own civic enterprises, such as streets, sidewalks, health, and schools, neglected for four years, the city faced future problems which in their magnitude rendered those of pre-war time insignificant by comparison.

Politically, the outlook was even worse. The reconstruction government in Tennessee was under the dictatorial power of Governor William G. Brownlow supported by the electorate of East Tennessee, who had remained loyal to the union. His government rested upon about 20 or 25 per cent of the electorate of the state, the other 75 or 80 per cent having been disenfranchised. West Tennessee, being the hot bed of confederate support, had to suffer every revenge this regime could impose upon it. Through the disenfranchisement of confederate veterans and sympathizers and the enfranchisement of the Negro, a controlled electorate was established and sustained with "the aid of a hand-picked militia, federal troops, and a muzzled judiciary." The Metropolitan Police Act gave Governor Brownlow complete power of appointment and control of the police organizations of Memphis, Nashville, and Chattanooga. Nor was the local government by comparison an improvement over Brownlow's state government. The Negro riots of 1866 were carried out by the local police force, composed chiefly of the Irish. Burglary, crime, and murder were common,with the culprit rarely apprehended or convicted. The contracts most likely to receive the council's approval were those which provided fat commissions to the "ring," and many of the aldermen were dubbed by the mayor himself in 1868 as "a parcel of thieves and scoundrels." Schools could hope for little under such stringent economic and deplorable political circumstances.

As early as February, 1864, the mayor appointed a committee of aldermen to act with the visitors on buildings,[1] and in April following, the mayor's committee reported favorably upon the purchase of two lots.[2] In September, however, the friends of education met another disappointment when the mayor and board of al-

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[1] Minutes of the City Council, Feb. 2, 1864.

[2] Ibid., Apr. 5, 1864.

dermen voted against the purchase of the lots.[1]

One year later another aldermanic committee was appointed to reconsider with the visitors the purchase of school grounds.[2] This committee, contrary to all others, took the viewpoint of the visitors, that it is cheaper to buy property and build buildings than to continue the outgrown practice of rentals,[3] and they further recommended the purchase of three lots selected by the board of visitors, one on Adams street across the bayou upon which to erect the central school,[4] a second in South Memphis on Pontotoc and Vance streets,[5] and a third in North Memphis on Auction street.[6] A grateful board of school visitors addressed the Honorable board of mayor and aldermen: "The unanimous adoption by your honorable body of the various resolutions approving the several actions of the board of school visitors embracing the prospective improvement of public education by providing and erecting well adapted school buildings does unmistakably rebound to your credit and an appreciating public will never forget the names of those who have been instrumental in the promotion of popular education which is the corner stone of a well founded republic."[7] Also, Superintendent W. Z. Mitchell declared "it should be a source of just pride that you were the agents who purchased the first property for school purposes. . . . ."[8]

The conditions of the postwar era compelled the aldermen to a changed attitude on the subject of school buildings. Very little construction was possible during the war. After the war, a population increase of 40 per cent rendered the housing situation acute. Where leases were obtainable, the prices were exorbitant. The frequent complaint of the visitors that it was difficult to obtain even inadequate buildings at inflated rentals seems to be justified by the analysis of school budgets over a period of years before and after the school year 1865-1866. Before 1860, ten per cent of the school board's current expenses was expended each year for rent and repairs. In 1866 this item ascended to eighteen per cent. After this date it began to descend and

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[1] Ibid., Sept. 20, 1864. [2] Ibid., Oct. 17, 1865.

[3] Ibid., Nov. 7, 1865. [4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., Jan. 2, 1866. [6] Ibid., Jan. 16, 1866. [7] Ibid.

[8] Fourteenth Annual Report, op. cit., 1865-66, p. 14.

reached seven per cent in 1870. This diminution is accounted for more by the investments made in purchased property than by reduced rents.

TABLE 2

PER CENT OF CURRENT EXPENSES SPENT FOR RENTS AND REPAIRS FOR SELECTED YEARS

School Year	Amount Disbursed for Rents and Repairs	Per Cent of Current Expenses
1856-57[a].....	2,361	12
1857-58[b].....	2,199	10
1860-61[c].....	4,000	13
1865-66[d].....	9,163	18
1867-68[e].....	8,276	13
1869-70[f].....	4,340	8
1870-71[g].....	3,733	7

[a] Fifth Annual Report, 1856-57, op. cit., p. 19.

[b] Sixth Annual Report, 1857-58, op. cit., p. 14.

[c] Eighth Annual Report, 1860-61, op. cit., p. 20.

[d] Fourteenth Annual Report, 1865-66, op. cit., p. 8.

[e] Sixteenth Annual Report, 1867-68, op. cit., p. 146.

[f] School Board Minutes, Aug. 29, 1870, p. 228.

[g] Ibid., July 16, 1871, p. 307.

The type of buildings available for rent may be ascertained from the statement of the superintendent during that climacteric year of 1866 when the aldermen for the first time agreed to the purchase of property and the erection of buildings:

> Eleven years ago it was my fortune to be in the service of the city as a teacher of a junior school. At that time the facilities of the schools were superior in respect to rooms to what they are at present.[1]

The minutes of the board of visitors are replete with

[1] Ibid., p. 57.

makeshift arrangements, a few of which are quoted:

> 1. Resolved, that the schoolhouse on the corner of High and Washington streets be abandoned, but as long as our lease runs or until the board finds some other suitable rooms, the building in the rear of the main building be retained.[1]
>
> 2. Your petitioners, the board of school visitors most respectfully represent to your honorable body [board of mayor and aldermen] that they are in great need of suitable buildings for school purposes and their finances being in so straightened a condition that it is almost impossible for them to procure buildings or rooms, and having learned that the Exchange Hospital building is now unoccupied they, therefore, respectfully request that your honorable board will grant to your petitioners the privilege of using so much and such portions for school purposes as they in their exigency need.[2]
>
> 3. Special committee reports that they selected rooms in Exchange Building free of rent from the board of mayor and aldermen for schools. The place is filthy and the cistern, pipes, and pump in need of repair.[3]
>
> 4. Committee on location of schools reports that they have leased for 4 1/2 years a very eligible building on Chelsea for a schoolhouse and commodious enough for 8 schools of 50 pupils each.[4]
>
> 5. House for schools was leased on Poplar Street for 4 years at $50 per month. . . . . House can be altered to accommodate 200 pupils.[5] .
>
> 6. Committee to report on a school for the tenth ward, report that the ward is so big, it needs two schools. . . . . Arrangements were made with Mrs. Hays, who is now operating a private school, to change her school into a city school, she acting as principal and furnishing her own assistant and house for $150 per month.[6]

These tribulations caused the committee on schoolhouse planning to write, "Could our citizens be induced to look into some of our schoolrooms and witness the poor accommodations afforded for instruction, the want of apparatus, the cheerless and gloomy rooms, for which higher rents are exacted, a better condition of schoolhouses might be expected."[7]

Under the authority of the charter of 1860, the mayor and

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[1] School Board Minutes, Sept. 9, 1867.

[2] Minutes of the City Council, Feb. 4, 1868.

[3] School Board Minutes, Apr. 6, 1868.

[4] Ibid., Mar. 2, 1868. [5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., Apr. 6, 1868.

[7] Fourteenth Annual Report, 1865-66, op. cit., p. 10.

aldermen, now convinced that the school building program could no longer be side-stepped, enacted a tax measure imposing 20 cents on each $100 assessment for the purchase of property and the erection of buildings for the use of the schools.[1]

The pressing need for schoolrooms, since rented quarters were no longer available, and the limited amount of money available, influenced the board of visitors to alter somewhat their plan of large, commodious brick schoolhouses. It was accordingly planned to erect two temporary frame buildings, one on a lot on Alabama street on which the board held an extended lease, and the other on a lot on Linden street which the board had recently bought.[2] These two buildings were built on a similar plan and were described by the press as being one story, eight rooms to the building, and each room accommodating thirty pupils.[3] These two frame schoolhouses were planned and built by men who considered them a temporary stop-gap, but the hands of Fate destined that they should be used continuously for the next quarter of a century.

Meanwhile, the superintendent and the board had far-reaching plans according to which they worked ceaselessly. The plan for three schools, in the north, the central, and the southern districts still ranked first whenever the new brick schools were to be built. Not only these schools but others to be built were to be in architectural design, extensive, handsome, and inviting;[4] to serve large centers of population;[5] and to be large enough to justify the employment of a principal.[6]

To execute this plan it was deemed advisable to employ some legal coercion on the council. Evidently the board of visitors and their friends enforced the enactment of a new school charter, that of January, 1869. This period in state government saw the enactment of the first extensive system of state schools. John Eaton, a carpet-bagger in Memphis and editor of the Memphis

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[1] Minutes of the City Council, Feb. 6, 1866.

[2] Ibid., Sept. 4, 1866.

[3] Memphis Daily Post, Mar. 25, 1867.

[4] Annual Report of The Board of Education of The Memphis City Schools for 1869-70, with Appendix for 1868-69, p. 7.

[5] Ibid., p. 53.

[6] Ibid., p. 54.

Daily Post, a carpet-bag newspaper, was at this time state superintendent. These reconstruction forces in Nashville were sympathetic agents which the visitors enlisted to secure their new charter, the aldermen notwithstanding. This charter imposed on the council the obligation of raising by a special tax or by the sale of bonds $50,000 each year for 10 years to be used exclusively by the visitors to provide schoolhouses.

The South Memphis school eventually found its inception in a contribution from the Peabody fund. In the summer of 1868, the president of the board was authorized to purchase a lot from John Overton in South Memphis on the corner of Webster and Lea streets.[1] Shortly afterwards, the Peabody Trustees gave to the school visitors $4,000, which amount was matched, and the first half of an imposing two story, eight-room schoolhouse was erected at a cost of $8,000.[2] The remaining half of this building was not completed until four years later, in 1872. The school was named Peabody School in honor of its benefactor, George Peabody.

The first year's allotment under the new charter of $50,000 annually for school buildings was issued in the form of school bonds in 1870, and with this sum the second brick building was erected.[3] A lot was acquired for the North Memphis school at the corner of Market and Third streets for $30,000 in March, 1870.[4] Plans for the new building were drawn and the contract let in May, 1871.[5] The building was rectangular including a basement and three floors above. In the basement were furnaces, coal bin, and water pump. The first floor, as the two above, contained four rooms, one at each corner of the building, measuring twenty-six by thirty-three feet, the ceiling being fourteen feet high. Attached to each room, was a "wardrobe room," eight by twenty feet, containing pigeon holes for hats, rack for umbrellas, and a wash basin with running water. A large hallway ran through the middle of each floor from north to south, at the north end of

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[1] School Board Minutes, July 6, 1868.

[2] Annual Report, 1869-70, op. cit., p. 56.

[3] Ibid., p. 53.

[4] School Board Minutes, Mar. 14, 1870.

[5] Ibid., May 12, 1871.

which was a stairway to the next floor by means of one landing midway between floors. At the first ascending landing was the principal's office, with speaking tubes to each room, and at the landing between the second and third floors was a library room. Wash rooms were available for both men and women teachers. The building throughout was heated by furnaces and ventilated by air shafts. On the third floor a lecture room could be provided by opening large sliding doors which separated two classrooms. The exterior in its day presented an ornament to the city.[1]

On January 6, the mayor, the aldermen, the school visitors, and citizens gathered in this building for dedicatory exercises.[2] Two days later the school was formally opened in the first brick school building ever completed in the city of Memphis, twenty-four years after the first ordinance legalizing public schools.

Two months after this memorable occasion, the board of visitors awarded a contract for the completion of Peabody School in South Memphis.[3] The building was completed "in accordance with the plan upon which it was commenced several years ago," and opened for use the following September.[4] In architectural design and appointments this building is almost an exact duplicate of the Market street building, with one marked exception--it contained two stories and eight rooms instead of three stories with twelve rooms.[5]

In the annual report of 1871-1872, the superintendent writes with exultation,

> It affords me much pleasure to refer to the completion of the noble edifice on Market street, a building which is at once an ornament to the city, and a lasting monument to the liberality and intelligence of the board of visitors. At the other end of the city, in stately proportions and beautiful design stands the magnificent Peabody. . . . . While we hail with pride and pleasure the advent of these two noble buildings, we will indulge the hope that the board will not relax their efforts until they shall have completed other buildings

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[1] Appeal, op. cit., Jan. 7, 1872. [2] Ibid.

[3] School Board Minutes, Mar. 11, 1872.

[4] Twenty-second Annual Report of the Board of Education of the City of Memphis, 1872-73, p. 21.

[5] Twenty-first Annual Report of the Board of Education of the City of Memphis, 1871-72, p. 21.

where most needed.[1]

The third and last brick building constructed during this period under consideration was Clay Street School in South Memphis for Negroes. The lot on the corner of Clay and De Soto streets was acquired in April, 1873,[2] contract was let May 12,[3] and the building was completed and occupied March 14, 1874.[4] This building contained "eight fine classrooms, with all needful conveniences constructed on the same plan as the Market Street and Peabody schoolhouses, and has been furnished throughout with new furniture of the latest and most approved kinds."[5] It appears significant that the third brick school building ever built in Memphis was a school for Negroes.

During the time that the Market street or North Memphis school and the Peabody or the South Memphis school were being planned and erected, the board labored diligently to get the central school under way, but many difficulties were encountered. In the first place, since this building was to house all the white children in the central part of town and, in addition, the high school pupils from the entire city, it had to be far more pretentious than anything yet undertaken and therefore more costly. In the second place it had to be east of the business part of town and across Gayoso bayou. Much bickering ensued over its location. Committee after committee was appointed for its location and planning. Two lots, which were later sold, were secured, both on Adams street, one purchased in 1865[6] and the other in 1869.[7] Before differences could be compromised, the cherished vision of a magnificent central school had to be sacrificed to the ravages of the yellow fever epidemic. After 1873 "economic stagnation" visited the city, brought about by yellow fever, the panic of 1873, and the mounting municipal debt.[8]

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[1] Ibid., p. 10. [2] School Board Minutes, Apr. 14, 1873.

[3] Ibid., May 12, 1873.

[4] Twenty-third Annual Report of the Board of Education of the City of Memphis, 1873-74, p. 34.

[5] Ibid., p. 6.

[6] Minutes of the Council, Nov. 7, 1865.

[7] School Board Minutes, June 4, 1869.

[8] Capers, op. cit., p. 194.

TABLE 3

COST OF LOTS ACQUIRED AND BUILDINGS ERECTED
FROM 1865 TO 1873

Location	Cost of Lot	Cost of Building	Total Outlay
Adams Street.....	$12,000	.....	$ 12,000
Auction Street.....	20,000	.....	20,000
Linden Street.....	20,000	$12,728	32,728
Alabama Street.....	(lease)	11,904	11,904
Adams Street.....	15,000	.....	15,000
Peabody.....	3,650	30,450	34,100
Market Street.....	30,000	33,500	65,500
House on Adams.....	.....	9,500	9,500
Clay Street.....	2,400	17,616	20,016
Total.....			$220,751

Considering the difficulties encountered during these distressing years of postwar reconstruction, the board of visitors, its superintendents, and city officials made the first genuine effort to meet the demands of the community to house its children in modern school buildings. Their actions in respect to the school building program are summarized in Table 3.

The Period of Depression, Yellow Fever, and Bankruptcy, 1873-1883

This decade represents the darkest chapter in the history of Memphis, even worse by far than the Civil War period. Pestilence, debt, and political corruption ushered the city into complete bankruptcy by 1880. After 1874, the council failed to provide the $50,000 annually for school buildings. During this era no real estate was purchased nor buildings erected. After such an illustrious beginning in the preceding period, a study of this period can only turn upon the causes for the cessation.

The first cause was that of yellow fever. Looking backward from the eminence of our acquired scientific understandings, it is easy to censure a past generation unarmed by such facts. True enough, the city was a cesspool of uncleanliness. It was

surrounded on the west by the Mississippi River, on the north by Wolf River, on the east by Gayoso Bayou, a stagnant stream and only about one-half mile from and parallel to the Mississippi, and on the south by Nonconnah Creek, which streams at low water season were perfect breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Before the days of sewers and running water mains, the surrounding streams and the improvised privy vaults had to absorb the garbage and excretions of approximately 50,000 people. Flies and mosquitoes in Memphis had a haven created by the hands of man and nature. Whenever a river boat wharfed below the bluffs and discharged a sick crewman or passenger from a Caribbean or New Orleans port, there was always a possibility in late summer that such a patient was a victim of yellow fever and Memphis could have an epidemic. In that day municipal hygiene was associated with the cause of epidemics, but not insects. In spite of this belief and the agitation on the part of the board of health and physicians to clean up the city, Memphis did next to nothing to alleviate the stagnation.

Even previous epidemics were no warning. In 1855 there were 1,250 cases of yellow fever, 220 of which were fatal.[1] In 1867 there were 2,500 cases with 550 deaths.[2] In 1873 there came the first consciousness that Memphis could never fulfill its destiny in the national economic progress until this fateful malady was conquered. The records of the epidemic of 1873 show 5,000 stricken, 2,000 fatally. A frightful exodus from the city reduced the population from approximately 45,000 to 25,000[3] within a few weeks. Two members of the board of visitors,[4] four teachers in the city schools, and thirty-five pupils from Market street school alone,[5] died of the plague. By 1875 the population was 40,230. If the rate of increase from 1865 to 1870 had prevailed, the population would have been 53,000 in 1875.[6]

Yet another and a worse experience with the yellow fever

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[1]Keating, op. cit., p. 367. [2]Capers, op. cit., p. 182.

[3]Keating, op. cit., p. 619.

[4]Appeal, op. cit., Nov. 12, 1873.

[5]School Board Minutes, Nov. 17, 1873.

[6]Keating, op. cit., p. 628.

was to follow. The epidemic of 1878 practically decimated the city, bankrupted it financially, and brought about, temporarily, its economic and political demise. By the middle of August the "yellow-jack" was loose again. A terrified populace "by rail, by river, by wagon, and on foot" formed a migration 25,000 strong. In haste to find passage--such was the press of the throng--many deserted their homes, unlocked, and the cultural savings of a life time in the form of furniture, paintings, silverware, etc., were left to neighbors, and to the hands of Fate.[1] "By the middle of September, only 19,600 people remained in the city, 14,000 of whom were Negroes and most of the whites were Irish."[2] The city was, thereafter, impoverished.

The second cause militating against school construction during this decade was that of municipal debt. City officials, in the decade of the seventies, not only had to meet the financial difficulties of their own day, but now were face to face with the profligacy of prewar and postwar extravagance. Many original bonds sold at 65 cents on the dollar had been refunded at 21 cents. Since the war, scrip had been issued regularly and soon dropped to 65 cents in value. With population at a standstill, with tax rates increasing, and with assessment valuations decreasing, with a $4 tax levy against each $100 assessment, and with the debt mounting annually, the propertied and tax-paying classes organized for relief. The Peoples' Protective Association was organized. Led by a group of able lawyers and business men, this agency made a comprehensive study of every branch of municipal government including the schools. They pointed out: that rents on real estate did not pay the taxes, upkeep, and insurance; that few were willing to buy or build; that local capital sought investment abroad at cheaper rates; that a controlling element of the electorate, who owned no property and paid no taxes, "fix upon us at frequent and expensive elections a swarm of incompetent and corrupt officials"; and that the whole machinery of government should be changed. They proposed a repeal of the city charter and that the city be governed by commissioners appointed by the governor with the approval of the senate.[3] Whatever was

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[1] Ibid., pp. 655 and 665. [2] Capers, op. cit., p. 195.

[3] Ibid., p. 202.

lacking in the force of their arguments in 1875 to enlist the support of the electorate, the press, and local officials, was cruelly afforded by the fatal consequences of the yellow fever epidemic of 1878. No other alternative was at hand.

The school visitors, after surrendering for the time the promotion of their building program, were forced to resort to many retrenchments. Half-day sessions were introduced, repair of buildings was neglected, class sizes were increased, fewer teachers were employed, and salaries were reduced. The six intervening years between the two epidemics witnessed an annual diminution in school expenditures until that of 1879 was only 40 per cent of that of 1873.

The Period of the New City, 1883-1930

To survive, Memphis must have a "New Deal." Accordingly, her corporate existence enduring since 1826, was "resolved back into the body of the state." In January, 1879, Memphis became a taxing district of the state.[1] This act created a local council of two boards. One board, that of fire and police, consisted of three commissioners, one elected locally and the other two appointed by the governor. The other board consisted of five commissioners of public works, three elected locally and two appointed by the governor. Commissioners of both boards composed the legislative council. The chairman of the board of fire and police, appointed by the governor, was the chief judicial and executive officer of the taxing district.[2] This act had for its purpose to make possible the cleaning up of the city, the draining of its stagnant streams, the repayment of the city's debts, the elimination of the rabble from the electorate and the trickster politicians whom they supported from office, and in general, the fiscal administration of all governmental agencies, including the schools, which had supervision over some department of the general welfare. What is more important, all of these things were to be done on a pay-as-you-go basis, established by a balanced budget and a reasonable tax rate, both of which must be approved by the state.

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[1] Acts of the Legislature, Jan., 1879, chap. xi, p. 15.

[2] Ibid., p. 17.

By 1889, when the school budget again reached the expenditures of 1873, and the school building program was again resumed, a grateful populace could render thanks for achievements performed which had been denied them for a half century. Privy vaults, leaky cellars, cisterns, wells, and stagnant pools had been replaced by a systematic collection of garbage, periodic hygienic inspections, a city-wide sewer system and an artesian water system from thirty-two wells over 400 feet deep. The main city thoroughfares had been paved with durable stone. The wanton debts of previous governments had been paid. Bonds representing new debts had been sold at par, some of which were now at a premium, and bore interest rates from 4 to 6 per cent. Epidemics had been eliminated. The population since 1875 had doubled, being 64,495 in 1890, and a new railroad bridge transversing the Mississippi river was under construction.[1]

By 1883 the efficient character of the new government was apparent to all. In emulation of its excellencies, new amendments to the school charter were applied for and received in that year.[2] The new board consisted of five members elected from the city at large. They had practically the same powers and duties as their predecessors, but one notable exception related to school buildings. Bonds for such a purpose were hereafter authorized by the legislature as amendments to the school charter. Interest and sinking funds pertaining to their maintenance and retirement must be provided in the city budget approved biennially by the state. This pattern of financing school construction endured from that day forth with but little variation, until the depression of 1929, hence this division of this study embracing from 1883 to 1930. Most of the sessions of the legislature from 1890 to 1925 record an amendment to the Memphis school charter authorizing the issuance of bonds for school construction, specifying not only the amount, but the maximum rate of interest, the conditions of sale, and the management of the sinking funds to sustain their interest and retirement.

To rebuild a new city on the ruins of the old, the taxing district officials necessarily turned their efforts, energies, and most of the tax revenue toward hygienic reform. During the

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[1] Young, op. cit., pp. 196-211.

[2] Acts of Tennessee, 1879, chap. 17, sec. 1, p. 20.

first ten years, therefore, of this regime, the schools could hope for little since street pavings, sewers, a water system, etc., must precede. By 1889, however, city finances could absorb a $100,000 bond issue for school buildings.[1] This authorization was repeated a few times before the turn of the century. By 1900 the school board had erected six more brick school houses. These were the first permanently constructed buildings since 1873.

TABLE 4

PERMANENT SCHOOL BUILDINGS ERECTED IN MEMPHIS PREVIOUS TO 1900, THEIR NAMES, DATE OF ERECTION, AND TOTAL COST[a]

Original Name	Present Name	W[b] or C[b]	Date of Erection	Total Cost Including Land, Buildings, Later Additions and Present Equipment
Peabody	Kortrecht Int.	W	1873	$ 45,487.19
Market St.	Christine	W	1872	96,903.08
Clay St.	Kortrecht Gr.	C	1873	46,854.08
Linden St.	Leath	W	1889	183,690.34
Virginia Ave.	Virginia Ave.	C	1890	31,714.24
Merrill	Merrill	W	1890	100,567.42
St. Paul	St. Paul	W	1890	106,932.01
Fowlkes	Vocational	W	1894	115,713.76
Poplar St. Hi	Adm. Bldg.	W	1899	149,229.85

[a]Audit of the Board of Education, June, 1943.

[b]White indicated by W; colored indicated by C.

The Memphis of today is the development of the twentieth century. Its founders, John Overton and James Winchester, and their early successors, were justified in their faith, that it would become the cross-road city of the Mid-Continental United States, but for three-quarters of a century Fate determined contrariwise. Very largely as a result of war it had to take second place to St. Louis as a trade center between the expanding agrarian Southwestern Empire and its supporting manufacturing and capitalistic counterpart of the East. Then came a second defeat,

[1]Acts of the Legislature, 1889, chap. 185, p. 349.

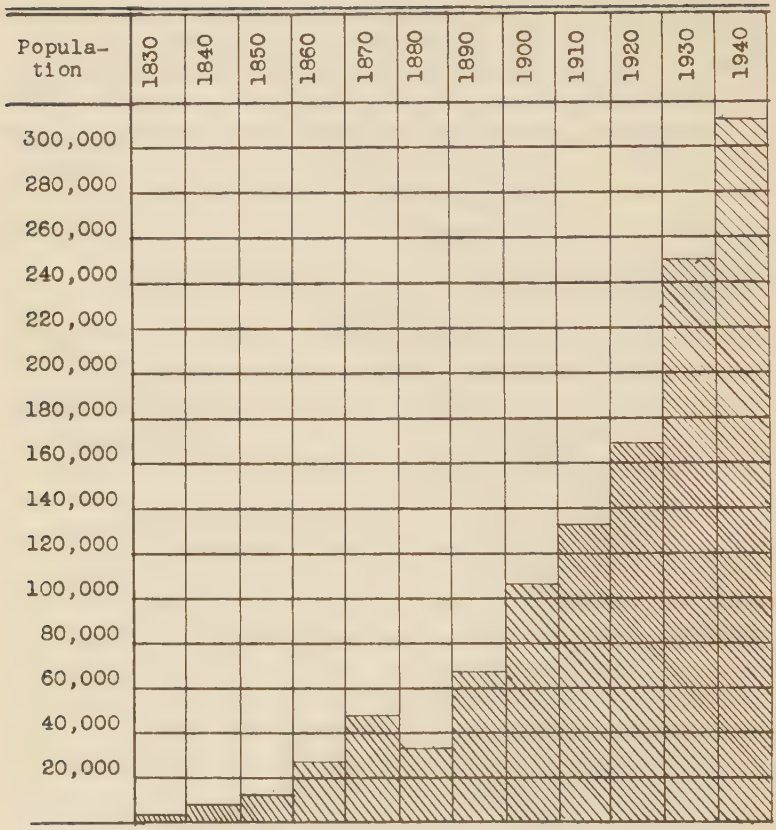

Fig. 1.--Population growth in Memphis since 1830 by decades (The Commercial Appeal, July 11, 1940).

more fatal and disappointing than the first--it was by-passed by northern capital, in favor of Atlanta, in postwar development, because of the unfavorable reputation it had attained by being victimized by disease and debt.[1] Since 1900, however, the city's dreams of 1840 and 1850 are finally coming to pass. While its population growth has not been phenomenal, it has been steady and continuous and is based on a stable economic and social foundation. Since the inauguration of the taxing district in 1879, the town has grown from 33,592 to over 300,000.

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[1]Capers, op. cit., p. 208.

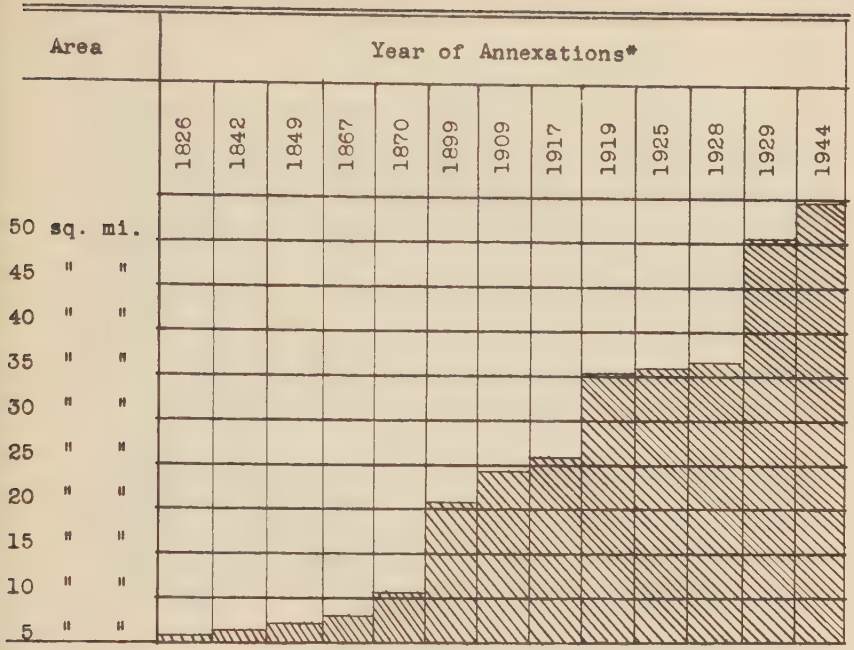

Fig. 2.--Growth of Memphis in area by successive annexations.

*Unpublished Records of the City Engineer's Office.

By repeated annexations the land area of the city today is twelve and one-half times as large as it was in 1898. Whereas the major axis of the city was from north to south, parallel to the Mississippi River, it now extends eastward from the river.

These increases in the population and the territorial extent of the city were accompanied naturally by a broadening of the tax base and an increased city revenue.

Coincidentally, the scholastic population and school enrollments since 1890 show a high correlation with each of these cited factors of population, city area, and taxable values. The scholastic population practically doubled each decade after 1890. Although the enrollments in public schools, until recent years, have been only about 60 per cent of the scholastic population, they have likewise doubled each decade since 1890. So long as prosperity pointed upward, the city finances could and did absorb

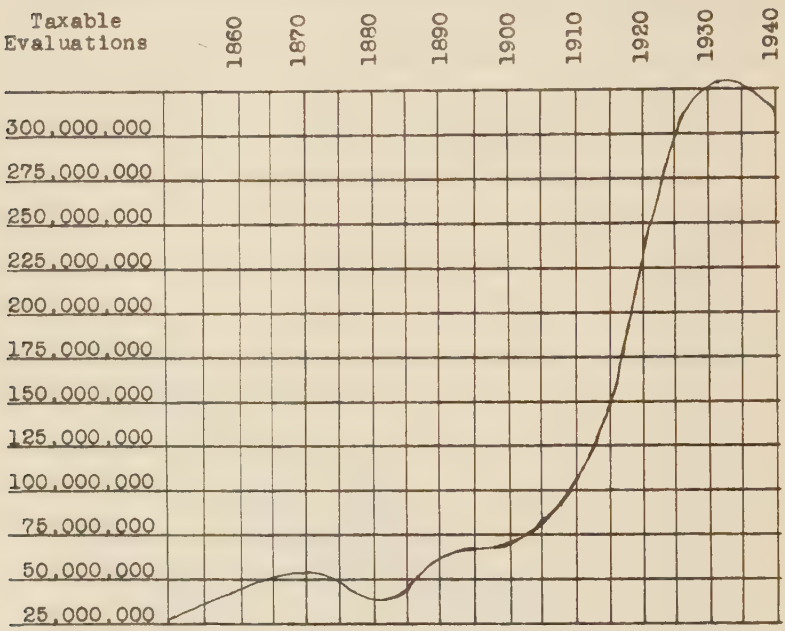

Fig. 3.--Taxable values of property in Memphis by decades from 1850 to 1940 (A Historical Sketch of the Evolution of Trade and Industry at Memphis, Tenn., 1914, by E. H. Hinton, p. 144, and A Brief Survey of Industrial Opportunities, Facilities and Cost Factors in Memphis, 1941, Memphis Chamber of Commerce).

more bonded indebtedness to provide school housing facilities.

The annexation of 1899 added a vast problem on the school board to assimilate and house the increase in scholastic population. By 1905 the scholastic population had increased 74 per cent and school enrollment 65 per cent. The Shelby County school system had in operation in the territory, when annexed, about 16 schoolhouses, seven for Negroes and nine for whites. All of these were small frame-constructed buildings. Those for Negroes contained only two or three rooms each. All were totally inadequate for future use in an area whose density of population was rapidly increasing. By amendments to the charter in 1899,[1]

[1] Acts of Tennessee, Apr. 21, 1899, chap. 273, sec. 1, p. 654.

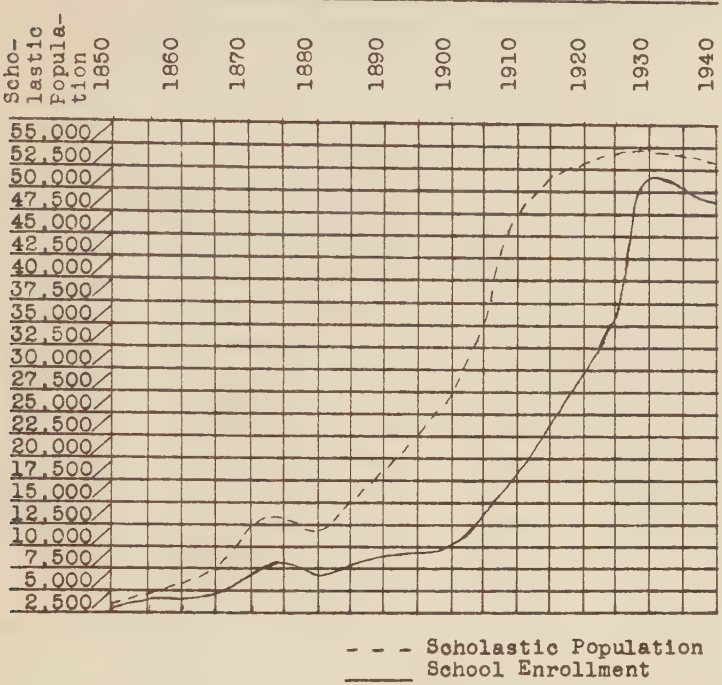

Fig. 4.--Scholastic population and public school enrollment in Memphis since 1850.

1901,[1] and 1903,[2] the board was enabled to issue more bonds and erect the original units of ten new school buildings, four of which were for Negro pupils and six for white pupils.

The architectural arrangement of these buildings was little different from those of 1872 and 1873. The original units of these ten buildings were dictated by the eight grade conception of school organization, with eight classrooms to the building, one room being afforded to each grade. The buildings were rectangular, consisting of two stories mounted over the customary basement. Each floor contained four large corner rooms. Invariably the principal's office was in a small room, opening onto the

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[1] Ibid., Apr. 2, 1901, chap. 123, p. 185.

[2] Ibid., Apr. 14, 1903, chap. 376, p. 1110.

TABLE 5

PERMANENT SCHOOL BUILDINGS, ERECTED IN MEMPHIS BETWEEN 1900 AND 1905--THEIR NAMES, DATE OF ERECTION AND TOTAL COST*

Original Name	White or Colored	Grades Embraced	Date of Erection	Total Cost of Buildings, Land, Additions and Present Equipment
Riverside.....	W	1-8	1901	$158,032.89
Lauderdale.....	W	1-8	1902	157,256.14
Cummings.....	W	1-8	1902	206,286.24
Madison Hts.	W	1-8	1902	82,663.46
Klondike (frame).	C	1-8	1902	Frame Bldg.
Idlewild.....	W	1-8	1903	225,904.32
Gordon.....	W	1-8	1903	
La Rose (frame)..	C	1-8	1905	141,410.03
Greenwood (frame)	C	1-8	1905	Frame Bldg.
Carnes (frame)...	C	1-8	1905	

*Audit of the Board of Education, 1943.

stairway landing midway between the two floors. The awkwardness of enlarging these buildings to meet future expansion was soon apparent. Whereas, all ten of these buildings were constructed almost identically in accordance with the same plan, the six for whites were made of brick and the four for Negroes were of wood. This policy was dictated by the limited amount of money available and the quantity of housing necessary. In recent years the four frame structures have given way to modern brick buildings.

The center of gravity in relation to population rapidly moved eastward. The new annexations filled up rapidly and additional schoolhouses were demanded. Accordingly, new amendments were attached to the charter in 1905[1] and 1907[2] legalizing the issuance of $800,000 in bonds, and new construction proceeded.

These seven buildings were similar to former buildings in that the original units contained eight classrooms and a principal's office. They differed, however, in the following respects:

[1] Ibid., Apr. 7, 1905, chap. 340, p. 713.

[2] Ibid., Feb. 6, 1907, chap. 41, p. 140.

They contained an auditorium, and instead of being rectangular, they were "T" shaped and could be, by future additions, converted into "E" shaped buildings which plan, with unnamed exceptions, has been wrought in the case of each of them.

TABLE 6

PERMANENT SCHOOL BUILDINGS ERECTED IN MEMPHIS BETWEEN 1905 AND 1910--THEIR NAMES, DATE OF ERECTION AND TOTAL COST*

Original Name	White or Colored	Grades Embraced	Date of Erection	Total Cost Including Land, Buildings, Later Additions, and Present Equipment
Bruce.....	W	1-8	1908	$138,649.96
Maury.....	W	1-8	1908	173,405.14
Pope.....	W	1-8	1908	151,602.92
A. B. Hill.....	W	1-8	1909	284,102.75
Peabody.....	W	1-8	1909	225,944.48
Lenox.....	W	1-8	1909	109,067.63
Snowden.....	W	1-8	1909	503,725.07

*Audit of The Board of Education, June, 1943.

The housing of the high school population was never a major problem until after 1900. The high school had its inception when in 1852 three types of schools were established, the primary, the junior, and the senior schools. Subsequent to the Civil War, the senior schools, one each for boys and girls, developed eventually into the high school. Rented quarters provided housing for the boys' and girls' high school in the early years. The first building owned by the board and occupied exclusively as a high school was Leath School.[1] Poplar Street High School was built and occupied in 1898. Within eight years this new building was so crowded that Fowlkes Grammar School, only a few blocks removed, was made an annex to the high school to house the ninth grade.[2] The old Peabody School became the high school

[1]Reports of the Board of Education of the City of Memphis, 1893, 94, 95, p. 24.

[2]Ibid., 1907-1908, p. 50.

for Negroes in 1910 and so remained until the construction of Booker T. Washington high school in 1926.

The phenomenal growth of high school population, as exemplified in Figure 5, caused a rapid and extended development in high school construction after 1910.

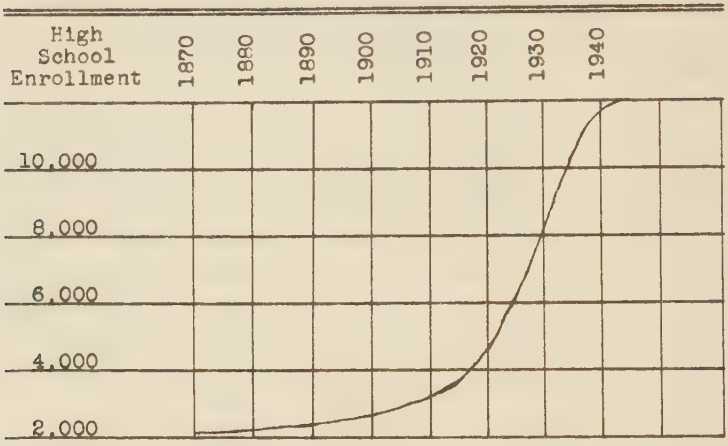

Fig. 5.--Growth of high school enrollments in Memphis by decades since 1870.

The dream of a central school of sixty years previous was finally realized when Central High School was opened in 1911. Up to that date it was incomparably the acme of school architecture in Memphis, and was situated very near the intersection of the two major axes of the map of the city. The idea that one central high school could accommodate the increase was out of date almost before the building was completed. Two new high schools were soon planned; one for South Memphis and one for North Memphis. The former, South Side High School, was erected in 1922 and the latter, L. C. Humes, in 1925. The old Poplar Street High School was replaced in 1928 by Memphis Technical High School about ten blocks farther east on Poplar. In South Memphis there was built a Negro high school, Booker T. Washington, in 1926, and in North Memphis a second Negro high school, Manassas, in 1928. By the annexations of 1928 and 1929, two more high schools have been added. Messick already contained a high school department and the city has ex-

tended the grades of Treadwell School to include the twelfth.

Practically all of the school buildings acquired by annexation from the Shelby County board of education since 1919 have proved too limited to absorb the growth in their respective areas, and the city school board has expended considerable sums by expanding those which were brick and replacing most of the frame buildings with brick structures. Messick and Treadwell, embracing elementary, junior high, and senior high grades have been extended four or fivefold. Hollywood, Lawler, and Florida Street Schools have been doubled in size. Extensive brick buildings have replaced the two-story frame houses of Manassas and Melrose. Mallory Heights, Ford N. Taylor, both of stucco construction, and Magnolia, a frame building, have remained as they were.

TABLE 7

HIGH SCHOOL BUILDINGS ERECTED AND ACQUIRED IN MEMPHIS BETWEEN 1910 AND 1920--THEIR NAMES, DATE OF ERECTION AND TOTAL COST

Original Name	White or Colored	Grades Embraced	Date of Erection	Total Cost Including Land, Buildings, Later Additions, and Present Equipment
Central Hi.....	W	10-12	1911	$522,343.58
South Side.....	W	9-12	1922	412,905.43
Humes.....	W	7-12	1925	790,937.53
B. T. Wash.	C	9-12	1926	344,475.41
Tech.....	W	10-12	1928	725,492.60
Manassas.....	C	1-12	1927	262,870.89
Messick.....	W	1-12	1908	250,368.51
Treadwell.....	W	1-12	1915	416,087.83

In addition to providing the housing facilities for the ever increasing high school pupils and either enlarging or replacing inadequate buildings acquired through annexation, the city school board found it necessary between 1910 and 1932 to erect fourteen elementary and junior high schools. About 1920 the reorganization of secondary education to include the junior high was started. Such buildings would relieve the pressure from below

TABLE 8

SCHOOLS ANNEXED FROM SHELBY COUNTY MOST OF WHICH HAVE BEEN ENLARGED OR REPLACED--THEIR NAMES, DATE OF ERECTION AND TOTAL COST

Name	White or Colored	Grades Embraced	Date of Erection	Total Cost of Building, Land, Additions and Present Equipment
Hollywood.....	W	1-9		$178,833.13
Treadwell.....	W	1-12	1915	
Lawler.....	W	1-6	1912	128,395.42
Messick.....	W	1-12	1908	
Mallory Hts...	W	1-8	1920	68,215.01
Ford N. Taylor	W	1-8	1918	37,269.34
Melrose.....	C	1-9	1914	Frame Bldg.Replaced
Manassas.....	C	1-12		Frame Bldg.Replaced
Florida St....	C	1-8	1924	140,214.49
Magnolia.....	C	1-6		5,990.55

TABLE 9

PERMANENT SCHOOL BUILDINGS ERECTED (OTHER THAN HIGH SCHOOLS) IN MEMPHIS FROM 1910 TO 1932--THEIR NAMES, DATE OF ERECTION, AND TOTAL COST

Name	White or Colored	Grades Embraced	Date of Erection	Total Cost of Buildings, Land, Additions and Present Equipment
Grant.....	C	1-8	1912	$146,525.44
Rozelle.....	W	1-6	1914	216,477.79
Guthrie.....	W	1-8	1915	185,527.91
Caldwell.....	C	1-8	1918	7,656.19
Lester.....	C	1-8	1923	110,066.20
La Rose.....	C	1-8	1923	175,824.64
Porter.....	C	1-8	1923	186,918.15
Lincoln.....	C	1-8	1923	91,701.20
Open Air.....	W	1-6	1924	75,772.63
Carnes.....	C	1-8	1926	146,349.71
Bellevue.....	W	7-9	1928	512,160.88
Vollentine....	W	1-6	1930	236,192.03
Fairview.....	W	7-9	1931	437,842.20
Bethel Grove..	W	1-6	1932	145,771.33

in the traditional grammar school and above in the high school by reducing the former to six grades and the latter to three grades. Another factor demanding this increase in the housing program was the tremendous increase in the Negro population, their compulsory attendance at school, and their inclination to remain longer in school.

The Period of Final Victory, 1930-1945

Besides extensive additions to many schools, this period witnessed the construction of six new schools and the acquisition by purchase of a seventh. Five of these seven schools were for Negroes. One new elementary school, Springdale, was erected for white pupils. In 1940 the board of education acquired by purchase the old property of Christian Brothers College. This building was converted into a national defense school and to date has trained over 26,000 people in some industrial skill as prescribed by the federal government.

TABLE 10

SCHOOL BUILDINGS ERECTED OR PURCHASED IN MEMPHIS BETWEEN 1930 AND 1944

Original Name	White or Colored	Grades Embraced	Date of Erection	Total Cost of Buildings, Land, Additions and Present Equipment
Manassas.....	C	1-12	1927	$262,870.89
Hyde Park.....	C	1-8	1936	181,753.13
Melrose.....	C	1-9	1938	179,920.55
Klondike*.....	C	1-8	1939	119,527.06
Hamilton*.....	C	1-12	1942	231,443.01
Springdale.....	W	1-6	1939	157,289.82
Nat. Defense.....	W	Ungraded		

*Modern brick building replaced old frame buildings.

This construction required a capital outlay of $2,500,257. Under various Public Works programs the Federal Government paid $604,089 of this amount and the school board absorbed the remain-

der, $596,000 by bond sales and $1,300,168 from current revenue.[1]

All the pupils both white and colored are housed in comfortable brick schoolhouses with the exception of the colored children in two small frame buildings, and these two districts have too few pupils at the present time to warrant new or larger quarters.

The problem of housing the children of Memphis in adaptable and durable schoolhouses has been integrated with the fortunes and misfortunes of community life at different periods. Previous to the war the interests and activities of civil officers were centered on those measures which would make the city materialisticly prosperous. In such efforts much of the city's wealth was extravagantly wasted and the schools were thereby doomed to shabby rented quarters for 24 years. Post-war prosperity, commingled with a spirit of social reform, provided the funds for three brick and two frame buildings between 1865 and 1874. The depression and gloom of city life after the yellow fever epidemic of 1873 arrested, for a period of 14 years, the building program begun in the previous period of post-war prosperity. For 30 years after 1873 only five school buildings were built, because the school had to wait while all available public revenues were being used in building the hygienic foundations of the "new city." As the "new city" has prospered so have the schools, and each year has seen the community extend its efforts to house its school children.

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[1]Unpublished financial records of The Board of Education.

CHAPTER IV

CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOL FINANCE

The power to levy taxes for the support of the Memphis public schools was, in 1848, conferred upon the board of mayor and aldermen. When the administration of the school system was transferred from the board of mayor and aldermen to an incorporated board of laymen, the power to levy and collect the education tax was not transferred. Successive school board charters have stipulated the maximum tax to be assessed by the city for school support. Because of its many economic upheavals the city found it impossible to raise enough revenue to support all community demands. In making apportionments in the distribution of the public revenue, the agencies for the materialistic development of the city often received preference over those for its cultural development. The maximum amounts, therefore, stipulated for school support were never forthcoming during the early years of school existence. The early history of school finance is the social conflict between the schools to attain the maximum amounts legally provided for the schools and the inability of the city council to provide them.

After successive impediments to a normal municipal development, occasioned by public extravagance, war, and recurring epidemics, the law transferred the maximum amounts for school support from the school board charter to the city charter. In the early period the plans of school administration were dependent upon the amounts of money which the city government was able to provide, and in the later period upon the amounts it was willing to have provided in amendments to the city charter.

This chapter is a study of the interrelationships and their attendant difficulties of two incorporated arms of state government operating in the municipality of Memphis. The purpose of one of these arms was to develop a system of schools; the other was charged with all governmental phases of communal development, including the determination of the amount of money avail-

able to the community for the education of its children.

The Early Struggle to Establish an Adequate School Revenue--The Period, 1848-1869

The new charter of the city of Memphis, granted January 21, 1848,[1] conferred on the city the authority to "establish a system of free schools . . . . to regulate the same . . . . and to create an annual fund not exceeding one-eighth part of the annual revenue of the city to be appropriated in the support of the same." In conformity with this authority the city council in May, following the establishment of free ward schools in January, 1848, added a one-eighth additional tax upon all property, real and personal, also upon all licenses, privileges and polls.[2] All such revenue accruing from this tax was to be "exclusively appropriated to defray the expenses of the schools and for no other purpose whatsoever."[3] The following year all theatrical companies were assessed twenty dollars per month additional, and circuses one-eighth of their receipts as a school tax.[4] In 1850 the school year was divided into three sessions and each child was required to pay one dollar for incidentals per session.[5] School taxes thereafter remained unchanged until 1856.

No official records of receipts or expenditures are extant for the first four years of schools under the management of the aldermen and Superintendent Pettit. The Memphis city directory of 1856-57 lists the annual costs as follows:[6] $1,574 in 1848-49, $2,468 in 1849-50, $10,163 in 1850-51, and $8,364 in 1851-52. Superintendent Pettit, no doubt, made an annual report to the council each year for such a report for the year 1850-51 is recorded in the press of that year.[7]

The school board method of accounting after 1853 was determined by the annual report which by ordinance must be made to

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[1] Acts of Tennessee, 1847-48, chap. 14, p. 114.

[2] Minutes of the City Council, May 22, 1848.

[3] Ibid., June 19, 1848. [4] Ibid., Feb. 10, 1849.

[5] Ibid., Aug. 6, 1850.

[6] Memphis City Directory, 1856-57, p. 11.

[7] Appeal, op. cit., July 10, 1851.

the council. This included a statement of expenses of the past year and a budget of expenditures for the ensuing year. These reports until 1868-69 record no statement of receipts. Much complaint appears that the council would never provide funds for a building program but none, that their budgets were not satisfied. It may be safely assumed, therefore, that the one-eighth tax laws provided sufficient revenue for the schools during their first dozen years of existence, since no record of debts or short-term borrowing exists. During the decade 1850 to 1860, school enrollments trebled, and the total annual expenditures doubled.

TABLE 11

SIX YEARS OF ITEMIZED ANNUAL EXPENDITURES OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS IN THE DECADE OF THE FIFTIES

Item of Expense	1853-54[a]	1855-56[b]	1856-57[c]	1857-58[d]	1858-59[e]	1859-60[f]
Salaries of teachers and superintendent	$ 8,365	$12,063	$13,430	$17,061	$15,792	$17,399
Rents and repairs.....	1,128	2,746	2,361	2,199	3,350	4,171
Books and stationery.....	.....	.....	202	271	*150	160
Printing and advertising...	.....	.....	220	267	* 98	140
Furniture.....	711	400	458	418	*104	998
Fuel.....	.....	.....	576	475	*475	419
Incidentals and servants hire.	949	1,030	1,035	795	*500	609
Total.....	$11,153	$16,239	$18,282	$21,486	$20,469	$23,896

*Estimated.

[a] Second Annual Report, 1853-54, op. cit., p. 9.

[b] Fourth Annual Report, 1855-56, op. cit., p. 20.

[c] Fifth Annual Report, 1856-57, op. cit., p. 19.

[d] Sixth Annual Report, 1857-58, op. cit., p. 15.

[e] Appeal, op. cit., July 19, 1859.

[f] Eighth Annual Report, 1859-60, op. cit., p. 20.

The salary expense bore a per cent ratio to total expense as follows: 75 per cent for 1854, 74 per cent for 1856, 70 per cent for 1857, 84 per cent for 1858, 77 per cent for 1859, and 73 per cent for 1860.

Until recent years, the school board authorities and the city officials have seemed to have an irreconcilable problem growing out of their legal financial relationships. School fiscal agents have seemed to act from the premise that it was their responsibility to frame a budget based on school needs restrained only by the maximum amounts of assessments imposed by their charters, and it was the legal duty and obligation of the councilmen to provide such revenue. On the other hand, councilmen have taken the position that their legal obligations are discharged to the school board when whatever school taxes collected are turned over to the schools irrespective of whether the budget demands are met or whether complete tax collections are made.

Under the charter of 1856, the city could levy an education tax the total amount of which should not exceed a ratio of $15 for every white youth in the city between ages 6 and 20 years. By the charter of 1858, this maximum was changed to $10 for every white child between the ages of 8 and 16. An amendment in 1860 increased the maximum again to $15 for ages 8 to 16.

When in 1868 the school visitors were encountering difficulty in paying their obligations, they blamed the city for nonfulfillment of its legal fiscal management of school taxes. When the schools were charged by the city of being in debt to them in 1868, the visitors responded by means of the facts presented in Table 12.

School officials argued that instead of being in debt to the city, their economical administration of school moneys had made possible the survival of the schools on a revenue $163,358 less than they were entitled to receive over a twelve-year period from 1857 to 1868.

The argument of the aldermen is succinctly stated by Mayor Park in his message to the Council in 1863.[1]

> It will be the duty of those having charge of the city schools to report to you the condition of the same, and to render an estimate of the amount which will be required for their support during the current year. By the charter, it

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[1] Minutes of the City Council, July 1, 1863.

TABLE 12

SCHOOL REVENUE AUTHORIZED BY THE CHARTER CONTRASTED WITH SCHOOL EXPENDITURES FROM 1857 TO 1868*

Year	Scholastic Population	Rate Authorized by the Charter	Total School Revenue Authorized by Charter	Expenditures
1856-57...	2,000	$15 for	$30,000	$20,000.00
1857-58...	2,000	Each Child	30,000	21,586.72
1858-59...	2,000	$10 for	20,000	20,569.99
1859-60...	2,000	Each Child	20,000	23,896.35
1860-61...	3,568		53,520	29,975.25
1861-62...	3,568		53,520	20,038.09
1862-63...	3,568	$15 for	53,520	20,078.86
1863-64...	3,568	Each Child	53,520	23,707.52
1864-65...	3,568		53,520	54,330.31
1865-66...	3,870		58,055	51,212.62
1866-67...	4,505		67,575	87,011.04
1867-68...	6,227		93,405	52,867.63
Total.			$586,635	$425,276.38

*Sixteenth Annual Report, 1867-68, op. cit., p. 133.

> has been made the duty of the board of aldermen to provide the means for the payment . . . . , but while this is expressed, it must also be implied that there is a limit to the expenditures authorized and that they must be made with an eye to the ability of the city to pay. It may be claimed by those having charge of the schools that the city is compelled to levy and collect so much for the support of same, though such is the case if . . . . she might fail after every reasonable effort to collect . . . . the proper revenue for the schools, the rendering of any assistance under such circumstances by the city to the schools would be a matter of mere expediency and choice without any legal obligation to do so.

This difference of viewpoint was again emphasized in a compromise effected between the two boards adjusting the fiscal difficulties attendant upon the Civil War and its consequences.

The shock of being a captured city after the summer of 1862 threw the financial structure of the city into turmoil and uncertainty. Previous to its capture, the city was a principal depot of trade for supplies for the confederate armies, and business flourished. After its capture, however, two years were nec-

essary to adjust to the new order of federal occupation. Currency, loans, and bills of credit issued and negotiated on Confederate trade were now worthless. All legal trade thereafter must be with or approved by federal agents. Conform or be driven from business or to prison was the order of the day. Many were bankrupted, many left rather than conform, most remained, however, to witness and share in the revival of trade which followed. There were legions, too, who continued the trade in contraband with the confederacy.

The three years of 1863, 1864, and 1865 witnessed a serious diminution in tax collections. The city, pressed from all quarters to pay not only its current obligations but its exorbitant pre-war debts, resorted to all forms of deferred payments such as scrip, warrants, and certificates of credit to be redeemed at par and usually bearing 10 per cent interest. During the six years represented in Table 13, the collections in school tax alone was $77,239.47 in arrears of assessed income. In spite of the school expenditures being reduced 33 per cent during the years of 1863, 1864, and 1865, tax collections were, nevertheless,[1] insufficient to sustain the schools from that source. The council, rather generously, in view of the extraordinary times, advanced credit to the school board in the form of city scrip or warrants and honored like instruments issued by the school corporation.

Inevitably, trouble ensued. Scrip and such soon declined in value. Originally issued at a discount of 85¢ on the $1.00, it fell in 1866 to 60¢. Naturally, these instruments gravitated into the hands of those individuals and institutions who had the means to take the risk and reap the profits, and incidentally, who were the largest tax payers. Soon they demanded and received the favor of paying taxes, including school taxes, in scrip and warrants issued by the city and by the schools. Such a practice enabled tax debtors to discharge their tax obligations at advantageous discounts while the city and the schools received a book balance but no currency for future needs. Thus the vicious circle in city finance was created. By 1868 city scrip was worth 33¢ on the $1.00, city bonds had dropped to 30¢, and interest rates to

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[1] Sixteenth Annual Report, 1867-68, op. cit., p. 133.

TABLE 13

THE TAX RATES, YIELD, COLLECTIONS, AND THE AMOUNTS PAID THE SCHOOL BOARD BY THE CITY COUNCIL BY YEARS FROM 1861 TO 1867[a]

Year	School Tax Rate Per $100	Yield	Collections	Paid to School Board
1861-62.....	16¢[b]	$ 24,261.39	$ 27,577.31	$ 24,449.15
1862-63.....	15¢	19,375.32	3,655.47	19,495.85
1863-64.....	12½¢[d]	18,857.65	10,563.47	25,909.18
1864-65.....	18¢[e]	45,778.63	29,876.36	46,082.26
1865-66.....	18¢[f]	53,597.95	58,919.08	51,212.62
1866-67.....	22¢[g]	65,919.03	55,588.61	50,188.85
Special Bldg. Tax..	...	35,629.80	.....	.....
Total....		$263,419.77	$186,180.30	$219,562.08

Total amount of assessment	$263,419.77
Total expenditures	219,562.08
Balance in favor of the schools	43,857.68
Total expenditures	219,562.08
School tax collected	186,180.30
Total amount overdrawn	33,180.30
Total amount of assessment	263,419.77
Total amount collected	186,180.30
Balance to be collected	77,239.47

[a] School Board Minutes, Jan. 28, 1867.

[b] Minutes of the City Council, Feb. 12, 1861.

[c] Ibid., Sept. 19, 1861. [d] Ibid., Dec. 2, 1862.

[e] Ibid., Sept. 1, 1863. [f] Ibid., Oct. 4, 1864.

[g] Ibid., Sept. 20, 1866.

the city were as high as 24 per cent.[1] The school board practice of making good to the teachers and business men their losses on scrip compelled the board to pay $1.66 for each $1.00 of service purchased.[2]

[1] Minutes of the City Council, Jan. 5, 1869.

[2] Fifteenth Annual Report, 1866-67, op. cit., p. 61.

The school board presented these arguments to the council:

1. There had never been a tax assessment equal to the ratio of $15 for each white child, ages 6 to 18 (compare Tables 12 and 13).[1]
2. On the basis of assessments made, the city had failed to collect $77,239.47 between 1861 and 1866 (see Table 13).
3. The school expenditures had consistently remained less than assessments.
4. The amount overdrawn was more than provided for by back taxes (see Table 13).
5. School enrollments between 1860 and 1868 had increased 72 per cent.[2]
6. Inflationary prices of the post-war period, paid in scrip money of variable value, necessitated a tremendous increase in school costs.
7. The school charter, section 8, required that the city tax collector turn over each month to the treasurer of the school board all moneys collected for the school fund, and that these funds were subject only to the order of the school board. Instead, the tax collector turned the amount collected over to the city controller, from which practice, much misunderstanding arose.[3]

The city council acted from the premise that they were "confronted with a condition and not a theory," for their position was:

1. The maximum education tax rate established by the school charter was not mandatory.
2. Since 1863, the council had increased the school tax rate each year, save one (see Table 13).
3. The total tax rates ordained by the council were all the people could justly endure.
4. The city credit had been generously extended to the schools, and the school account was overdrawn more than $33,000 (see Table 13).

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[1] Ibid., p. 58.

[2] Annual Report, 1883-84, 1884-85, op. cit., p. 20.

[3] Fifteenth Annual Report, 1866-67, op. cit., p. 58.

5. While "acting in the capacity simply as an agent [for the school board] we [the city council] cannot see the justice in increasing our own liability by assuming that of others."[1]

On July 1, 1867, preliminary to preparing their budget for the ensuing school year, the school board appointed a committee to confer with the mayor and aldermen "to effect a speedy adjustment of our financial arrangements with them."[2] Nine days later the mayor appointed a similar committee from the council.[3] This joint committee effected a compromise which was accepted by the two boards, to wit:

> That the Board of Mayor and Aldermen issue to the Board of School Visitors $20,000 in city scrip in final settlement of all financial matters to July 1, 1867, on the condition that the school board assign to the city of Memphis all school taxes due and uncollected before July 1, 1867, and that the controller be ordered to pay to the treasurer of the school board the balance due the city schools on all moneys collected and belonging to the city schools since July 1, 1867, and hereafter receive no more funds from the city tax collector belonging to the city schools.[4]

After this new understanding, the schools managed to survive financially in spite of discounted city credits until the period of pestilence and municipal debts ushered in the darkest among the many dark chapters in Memphis history, the decade from 1873 to 1883, to which this treatise now turns.

This study makes no effort to relate the social, economic, and political history of Memphis, but since the city during its seventy-four years of corporate existence of the nineteenth century experienced so many execrable misfortunes, it is necessary to bear in mind the results in order to understand and appreciate the slow progress of public education in Memphis and the insurmountable obstacles continuously faced by legions of self-sacrificing and civic-minded men who for decades gave of their time, abilities, and energies without compensation to advance the cause of free schools in this city.

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[1] Minutes of the City Council, Jan. 24, 1867.

[2] School Board Minutes, July 1, 1867.

[3] Minutes of the City Council, July 10, 1867.

[4] Ibid., Aug. 8, 1867.

Disaster and Survival
The Period, 1869 to 1889

Memphis recovered rapidly after the Civil War. By 1872, it had practically regained its cotton trade and banking capital. Its four railroads were rebuilt, and two new ones were under construction. Its harbor teamed with 40 boats, averaging 16,306 tons each, operated by eleven lines. Its cottonseed oil output led all other cities. It possessed five daily newspapers and developed three important suburbs. It was gaining recognition as a wholesale trade center as well as a convention city.[1] School expenditures more than trebled in amount between 1864 and 1873.[2] The school board obtained a new charter in 1869 authorizing an increase in its current revenue and imposing on the city council a contribution of $50,000 each year for ten years for a building fund. One major impediment remained to economic recovery; that was the continued impaired credit of the city government. The management of the school building bonds of $50,000 each year is an outstanding example of this. The first four years the city issued the $50,000, to the amount of $200,000. The school board marketed these securities at about 50¢ on the $1.00.[3] As related in Chapter II, Market Street, Peabody, and Clay Street schools were built with these proceeds. The contract price of the lot and grounds of Market Street school was $63,500 but it cost, due to depreciated bond values, over $80,000.[4] After the yellow fever of 1873, no more bonds were ever issued on account of this charter mandate, and those issued were repudiated by the city.[5] The $200,000 issued were finally redeemed at 54 1/2¢ on the $1.00 by arrangement of the taxing district commissioners in 1888.[6] Except for the depreciated city credit, the municipality had every reason to believe the long anticipated era of prosperity was surely at hand, but lurking in the darkness was a foe more treacherous and more dreaded than war, the scourge of yellow fever.

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[1] Capers, op. cit., pp. 185-186.

[2] Annual Report, 1883-84, 1884-85, op. cit., p. 20.

[3] Appeal, op. cit., Nov. 15, 1874.

[4] Ibid., Nov. 18, 1874. [5] Ibid., Nov. 15, 1874.

[6] Ibid., July 14, 1885.

The paralysis resulting from the epidemic of 1873[1] produced a five-year period of vindictiveness between a small but powerful business and tax-paying element on the one hand, and all governmental agencies, including schools, on the other. The old question of the right of the government to educate one man's son at the expense of a neighbor was paraded through the press. The Memphis Daily Avalanche and the Memphis Public Ledger not only attacked the schools from every conceivable angle but opened their columns to all who would follow suit. The Memphis Daily Appeal, be it recorded, remained the staunch supporter of free schools, consistent with reasonable economies that the times demanded. Miner Merriweather, a local attorney, and chief investigator for the Peoples Protective Union, and afterwards tax collector for the taxing district was the important mouthpiece for the disgruntled elements opposing schools. This question of the propriety of public education is practically nonexistent in the public press until the conditions of the 70's called it forth.

True it was that the conditions of the time demanded drastic measures. The city became enveloped in the fear of economic ruin after the effects of the 1873 epidemic, augmented as it was by the national financial depression of the same period. The city debt was now $5,500,000. The taxable evaluations had shrunk to $12,000,000, and the total tax rate was $4.85 on the $100.[2] The city scrip and warrants, freely discounted a few years before in the hope of future prosperity, now demanded redemption at face value in a time of unparalleled depression and desolation.

As a consequence, Miner Merriweather and his colleagues resorted to drastic measures. After having investigated every available item of the city government, they concluded that it had sacrificed even the right to longer endure, and recommended the abolition of local self-government and in its stead a commission form of government, the commissioners to be appointed by and responsible to the governor and the state legislature.[3] They accused the schools of being ruled by carpetbaggers, of importing a

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[1] Supra, p. 46. [2] Keating, op. cit., pp. 650-651.

[3] These facts are reviewed many times over in the public press between 1874 and 1876.

carpetbag superintendent in the person of Aaron Pickett and paying him a fabulous salary, of favoritism and nepotism in employing, retaining, and promoting teachers, of fostering the useless office of principal on the schools at a needless waste, of administering a course of study which is a "frill" of education, of prostituting the will of the people to build needless ornamented school buildings, of perpetuating a superfluous high school, and of composing a "ring."[1] This same Miner Merriweather and his followers recommended, as in the case of the city, that the schools had no justification for existing as a separate corporation and should be absorbed into the proposed commission form of government.[2] These recommendations were, when made, too drastic for acceptance by the press and city officials, but formed, nevertheless, a few years later, the basis of the government established under the taxing district.

These complaints and agitations compelled the application for and the reception of amendments to the city charter in 1875. This alteration imposed a maximum city tax rate for all purposes of $1.60 on the $100 and only 10¢ could be made applicable to schools.[3] The city charter ranked supreme over the school board charter and 10¢ remained the city education tax beginning 1875 to 1886. The city school tax yield dropped from $66,954 in 1872, to $3,723 in 1877 (see Table 14). If the purpose of Merriweather and his 8,000 confederated members of the Protective Union was to destroy the free schools, they succeeded so far as city tax rates were concerned. It was 1887 before the city revenue for schools ever again attained that provided in 1869 (see Table 14). Eighteen years of retrogression was a fate difficult to endure, but such was the fortune dealt to public education in Memphis by war, excessive municipal debt, pestilence, and social and scientific ignorance.

According to Emerson, there is for each loss a compensating advantage. At the very time that the city revenues were insufficient to sustain the schools there came the compensating elements of state and county support. By the state school laws

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[1] Ledger, op. cit., June 14, 21, 28; Oct. 18; Dec. 26, 1875.

[2] Appeal, op. cit., Jan. 12, 1875; Nov. 18, 1874.

[3] Ibid., Apr. 1, 1875.

TABLE 14

INCOME OF MEMPHIS SCHOOLS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES
FROM 1869 TO 1889

Year	School Tax Rate Per $100	Income from City School Tax	Income from State and County Taxes	Miscellaneous Income	Total Income
1869.....	30¢	$41,970.00	$15,943.40	$4,000.00	$ 61,913.58
1870.....	30¢	64,942.44	.....	1,221.00	66,163.44
1871.....	30¢	61,331.93	.....	906.75	61,643.82
1872.....	30¢	66,954.08	8,297.12	1,750.00	77,001.20
1873.....	30¢	59,980.71	15,980.71	1,810.00	
1874.....	20¢	65,101.26			65,101.26
1875.....	10¢	40,148.00	22,758.77	2,178.00	65,084.77
1876.....	..	.....	.....	.....	.....
1877.....	10¢	3,723.19	38,616.47	780.15	43,119.81
1878.....	10¢	7,091.62	40,374.98	5,336.91	52,803.51
1879.....	10¢	6,508.04	22,874.86	976.24	30,359.14
1880.....	10¢	15,740.05	19,366.84	912.50	36,019.39
1881.....	10¢	16,502.20	16,629.84	415.80	33,547.84
1882.....	10¢	20,793.61	34,466.41	1,200.45	56,460.47
1883.....	10¢	20,309.64	21,643.54	837.15	42,790.33
1884.....	10¢	24,036.39	27,897.81	804.75	52,737.95
1885.....	10¢	22,512.59	25,174.43	1,012.35	48,699.37
1886.....	10¢	22,917.90	26,544.34	1,241.90	50,704.14
1887.....	20¢	44,691.43	28,030.03	1,730.45	74,451.91
1888.....	25¢	43,845.97	33,721.03	.....	79,814.25
1889.....	..	66,814.01	46,100.85	1,985.90	114,900.76

of 1870,[1] the state assessed an education tax of 10¢ on each $100 evaluation in each county to be distributed back to the counties on a per capita school enrollment, and made mandatory the assessment of at least an equivalent rate in each county to be retained by the county in support of schools. In Shelby County, this state and county education tax was divided between the city of Memphis and the county of Shelby on the pro-rata basis of the scholastic population of the city as contrasted with that of the

[1] Acts of Tennessee, July 8, 1870.

county.[1] This source of revenue first recorded in 1873 as $15,980 for the city's share rose, to $40,375 in 1878 (see Table 14).

To operate on this diminished revenue the school management cut every possible item of expense as a study of Table 15 will reveal. A comparison of the year 1873 with 1876 shows an appreciable reduction in every item of expenditure except that of insurance. Total expenditures were reduced 37 per cent, salaries 35 per cent, rents 34 per cent, repairs 5 per cent, fuel 51 per cent, printing 50 per cent, books and stationery 100 per cent, and incidentals 76 per cent. Teacher salaries were 84 per cent of the total expenditures in 1873 and were 86 per cent after the reductions of 1876.

Many of the very best teachers withdrew from the system, among them two should be mentioned. One was Miss Jennie Highbee who for several years was principal and teacher of the high school for girls and the other Miss Clara Conway who was principal of Alabama Street school. Of all the teachers who have ever taught in Memphis, these two perhaps are the best remembered and the most highly honored. Both opened private schools which flourished throughout their lifetime.

Although these were distressing years, worse were to follow for the three years subsequent to the yellow fever epidemic of 1878[2] were the worst financially in the history of education in Memphis. The commissioners of the taxing district had to create a new city on the ruins of the old. First they had to live within a balanced budget each year. This budget had to be based on low taxes and low evaluations in order to invite rehabilitation. The gigantic debt had to be paid, most of which was refunded at discounts generally approximating those at which the city originally contracted them. Future epidemics must be eradicated. The schools had to await the accomplishment of these reforms absolutely necessary to the future existence of the city. The editor of the Memphis Daily Appeal, always an advocate of improved schools, sums the situation up as follows:

> Our proposed city tax for the ensuing two years is $1.60 for each year. Our state and county taxes are 75¢. If the

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Supra, p. 47.

TABLE 15

ITEMIZED EXPENDITURES OF THE MEMPHIS SCHOOLS FOR SIX SELECTED YEARS

Items	1868-69	1872-73	1875-76	1878-79	1882-83	1886-87
Indebtedness	.....	$11,157.89	.....	$ 1,000.05	.....	.....
Salaries	$39,085.87	63,122.61	$40,931.33	27,509.47	$38,318.23	$49,267.10
Rents	4,036.65	3,942.05	2,575.00	1,499.15	2,497.50	2,510.00
Repairs	2,880.04	1,445.49	1,366.56	1,306.50	993.64	1,034.95
Fuel	411.79	1,782.25	719.75	582.75	954.50	1,302.33
Insurance	.....	453.75	745.00	108.25	596.61	632.87
Interest	.....	1,009.61	.....	.....	305.09	1,107.59
Utilities	.....	.....	.....	9.30	316.90	346.20
Supplies	5,363.59	.....	.....	243.70	195.53	1,197.95
Printing	518.90	878.40	449.40	170.60	120.90	47.50
Advertising	.....	.....	.....	37.60	48.90	48.35
Books and stationery	1,495.80	724.06	.....	9.40	28.10	12.56
Incidentals	.....	1,577.17	394.35	390.20	330.91	621.60
Commencement	.....	.....	.....	75.30	83.35	73.45
Census	.....	.....	.....	325.07	233.00	314.22
Scrip outstanding	5,000.00	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total	$58,792.64	$86,093.28	$47,181.39	$31,359.14	$45,023.16	$69,085.17

> state debt is settled we should add 40¢ to this, and if the old city debt is settled we may add 50¢ more. All of these will make our aggregate of taxes $3.25 on each $100 of taxable values within the city limits. This will be burden enough for the present. Let us make haste slowly. When we have paved our streets, perfected our sewer system, eliminated epidemic diseases, collected our delinquent taxes, and restored Memphis to her natural and destined position--we can then better afford to increase our rate of taxation.[1]

The ten cent city tax rate for schools, imposed in the retrenchments of 1875 was continued by the taxing district commissioners until 1887 (see Table 14) when prosperity again had returned.

Shelby County also suffered from the ravages of the yellow fever, but not to the extent that Memphis did. County tax collections diminished. During the three years following 1878, the city's share of the county school tax was reduced by one-half, and it was not until 1889 that the returns from that source equalled those of 1878 (Table 14). One marvels how the schools, especially the teachers, managed to exist.

At the close of this period of the history of Memphis, there followed a decade of honest, scientific, and businesslike management of municipal government. With the accompanying growth in population, increase in business, and increase in values, the commissioners were able to turn more revenue into avenues of public improvements. Accordingly, twenty-five per cent of the city taxes in 1886 were thereafter to be used for "public grounds and buildings, including school buildings."[2] As a result, the school managers received from the city in 1887 a total of $44,691 (see Table 14), of which sum $19,209 was for school buildings and grounds. This is the first revenue earmarked for buildings since the "yellow jack" struck back in 1873.

When the commissioners' budget was being reviewed by the legislature in 1887, a committee composed of school board members and citizens appeared before the legislature to plead for an increase in the city school tax rate.[3] They were successful in their efforts and the tax rate was increased to 25¢, which accounts for the $66,814 city revenue for schools in 1889 (see Table 14).

The year 1890 is a natural break in the history of Memphis. The foundations of a new city were firmly established. The Appeal could say, "the city's growth is healthful, substantial,

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[1] Appeal, op. cit., Jan. 13, 1881.

[2] Ibid., Sept. 19, 1886. [3] Ibid., Jan. 21, 1887.

steady, and better than all, without that balloon tendency which seems to affect some of our neighbors."[1] From this date a school system of twelve school buildings, seven belonging to the city (three brick and four frame) and four rented, enrolling 5,735 pupils, employing 143 teachers, and expending $126,185[2] annually has steadily grown to one today consisting of 55 brick buildings and 6 frame and stucco buildings enrolling 45,000 pupils, and expending $3,103,666 annually.

The Convalescence Period, 1890-1900

This period of ten years is the most tranquil of any in the education history of Memphis. The population increased from 64,495 to 102,105 (see Fig. 1). School population jumped from 15,012 to 24,915, and enrollment from 6,073 to 10,774 (see Fig. 4). The number of teachers employed increased from 89 to 208. From 1889 to 1899 seven new brick schoolhouses were erected from the revenue derived from first, the Public Buildings and Ground

TABLE 16

RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES OF THE MEMPHIS CITY SCHOOLS FROM 1890 TO 1900

Year	Tax Receipts	Current Expenditures	Surplus
1890-1891.....	$ 106,465.52	$ 94,196.42	+27,462.05
1891-1892.....	107,594.19	112,772.89	+30,675.80
1892-1893.....	95,002.13	96,878.58	+20,207.07
1893-1894.....	92,346.54	85,765.90	+27,195.57
1894-1895.....	71,931.59	95,180.76	+ 2,943.07
1895-1896.....	168,875.62	99,720.99	?
1896-1897.....	70,792.42	108,679.58	?
1897-1898.....	161,080.84	138,340.47	+22,740.37
1898-1899.....	182,607.45	150,880.58	+31,718.87
1899-1900.....	154,823.00	186,800.51	+ 765.45
Total....	$1,211,519.30	$1,169,134.66	

[1] Ibid., Mar. 6, 1887.

[2] Ibid., July 10, 1889.

Act of 1886,[1] second, from a $100,000 bond issue of 1889,[2] and third, from a second bond issue of $70,000,[3] in 1899 (see Table 17). During this decade the school records show a surplus. Total tax receipts for the ten years were $1,211,519.30 and current expenditures were $1,169,134.66.

Recovery--The Period, 1900 to 1920

Those managing school finances during this period faced three major problems: first, to house the steadily increasing elementary and high school population in a city constantly expanding in area and population; second, to secure the authorization and to issue enough bonds to erect the necessary buildings; and third, to obtain sufficient revenue to sustain the annually increasing financial load.

The first twenty years of the twentieth century witnessed in Memphis a rather slow but steady growth from a population of 102,320 to 162,351, an increase of 59 per cent (Fig. 1). The area of the city expanded from 15 to 30 square miles, an increase of 100 per cent (Fig. 2). Taxable property values rose from $50,000,000 to $200,000,000, an increase of 350 per cent (Fig. 3). Twenty-three brick, several frame and innumerable portable school buildings, also several annexes to old and new brick buildings were constructed. Finally, school enrollment ascended from 10,774 to 29,870, an increase of 178 per cent (Fig. 4).

Very few difficulties were experienced in floating the necessary bonds. Usually the school board presented their case to the city council, who in turn persuaded the Shelby County delegation of the state legislature to secure the enactment. These several acts of local legislation took the form of amendments to the city school charter of 1869. They were all very specific, enumerating the amount to be issued, rate of interest, par value, date of maturity, source of funds to sustain the interest and sinking funds, the management of these funds, and the purpose for which the proceeds of the bonds could be used.

The good times of 1890 to 1900 began to terminate about

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[1] Supra, p. 78.

[2] Acts of Tennessee, 1889, chap. 185, sec. 1, p. 349.

[3] Ibid., 1899, chap. 273, pp. 654-656.

TABLE 17

BONDS ISSUED BY MEMPHIS CITY SCHOOLS FROM 1889 TO 1920, THEIR PURPOSE, RATE, AND METHOD OF MAINTENANCE AND REDEMPTION

Year	Amount Authorized	Amount Issued	Int. Rate	Purpose	Who Pays Interest	Who Pays Sinking Fund	Special Tax
1889.....	$100,000	$100,000	6	B. and G.	School Board	City	Yes
1899.....	30,000	30,000	4	All	School Board	City	Yes
1902.....	100,000	70,000	4	B. and G.	School Board	City	Yes
1903.....	100,000	75,000	4½	B. and G.	School Board	City	Yes
1905.....	125,000	125,000	4½	B.G.and R.	School Board	City	Yes
1907.....	300,000	300,000	4	B.G.and R.	School Board	City	Yes
1909.....	500,000	498,000		B.G.and R.	School Board	City	Yes
1911.....	250,000	250,000		B.G.and R.	School Board	School Board	No
1913.....	40,000	40,000		B. and G.	School Board	City	Yes
1915.....	350,000	350,000		All	School Board	School Board	No

B = Buildings

G = Grounds

R = Repairs

All = Any purpose

1904 and reached extreme acuteness by 1914. From 1904 to 1914 the annual balance showed a deficit ranging from $8,000 to $200,000 gradually increasing each year (Table 18). So long as this annual deficit did not exceed $50,000 it did not prove a serious embarrassment to the board. A board member explained it this way,

> . . . . We have no trouble in bridging over the annual deficit, thanks to the treasurer. He has been advancing us the amount required for the last month or two of the years, making no charge for interest on that amount and repaying himself out of the next appropriation coming into the treasury.[1]

The fiscal year of the city government begins January 1 and that of the schools, July 1. The bulk of the taxes are paid after July resulting in the schools receiving a relatively small income from January to July. Thus the practice originated of borrowing on short-term notes during the first half of the year and pledging the second half year's tax receipts as security. When the overdraft was reasonable and no interest rate involved, the matter was simple, but where the overdrafts increased each year and interest rates were imposed, this venture was a poor risk for the banks and an additional burden on the board. By 1907 this deficit reached $63,722, and demanded rectification.

Sometime around 1900 the practice of levying a city tax rate for schools was abandoned and an allotment of so much money was annually appropriated. The amount set aside for schools was not only less each year than the amount provided in the school board charter but less than the amount asked for in the annual school budgets.[2]

Finally the school board undertook to assert its rights under the terms of its charter. In 1907 an amendment to the school board charter was enacted to the effect that, "the taxes levied for school purposes shall be a special tax for school purposes and is not to be considered as embraced in any act limiting the levy of tax in such taxing district or city."[3] The new city charter of 1907, likewise empowered the council to make a special levy for school purposes in addition to the regular tax for general purposes.[4] In December, 1907, a school budget was prepared

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[1] The Commercial Appeal, Apr. 23, 1904.

[2] Ibid., Dec. 19, 1907.

[3] Acts of Tennessee, 1907, chap. 87, p. 247.

[4] Ibid., chap. 184, p. 595.

which required a special education tax of 27¢.[1] The city club, composed largely of business and professional men and affiliated with the Memphis Chamber of Commerce, investigated the needs of the city schools and confirmed to the public and to the council their approval of the budget and pleaded for its adoption.[2] The council, nevertheless, assessed only a 20¢ tax rate and a deficit of approximately $50,000 continued through 1909 and 1910.

TABLE 18

CURRENT RECEIPTS, CURRENT EXPENDITURES, AND SURPLUS OR DEFICIT FOR MEMPHIS SCHOOLS, 1901 TO 1920

Year	Current Receipts	Current Expenditures	Surplus or Deficit
1900-01.....	$227,669.70	$143,551.01	84,514.22
1901-02.....	124,892.26	168,575.17	- 41,050.68
1902-03.....	150,288.76	170,722.37	- 20,849.98
1903-04.....	161,131.51	197,209.02	- 16,333.47
1904-05.....	216,635.10	225,235.56	- 8,600.44
1905-06.....	295,469.85	257,326.46	38,763.64
1906-07.....	167,330.72	269,340.51	- 63,722.69
1907-08.....	314,148.89	360,204.61	- 46,055.72
1908-09.....	335,098.10	337,229.41	- 48,187.03
1909-10.....	413,526.76	423,345.31	- 51,156.34
1910-11.....	535,120.24	478,964.20	4,680.76
1911-12.....	526,774.90	539,512.72	- 75,000.00
1912-13.....	504,614.66	612,019.27	-210,000.00
1913-14.....	580,427.60	626,891.09	

Having failed through legislative means to acquire sufficient funds to maintain adequate education facilities, resort was had to the courts. A mandamus suit was entered in March, 1908, to impose a 25¢ education tax rate instead of the 20¢ allowed, and further to determine two questions: first, does the school board have the right to determine the amount of the appropriation

[1] The Commercial Appeal, Mar. 7, 1908.

[2] Ibid., Mar. 22, 1908.

to be granted by the city council for school purposes, provided that the appropriation is within the limits imposed by the law; and second, is the school board a separate and distinct corporation existing under a separate and a specific charter, or is it a part of the corporation of the city of Memphis as any other department of city government, such as the fire and police department. All points at issue were sustained in favor of the school board by the chancery court of Shelby County,[1] but was appealed to the Supreme Court of Tennessee by the city council. In November, 1909, this court upheld the ruling of the lower court.[2] The board estimated that the difference between a 20¢ and a 25¢ rate would amount to $40,000.[3] After this back tax of 5¢ was imposed through the favorable outcome of the mandamus suit, the records show a mandamus tax collection of $28,034.08 for 1911,[4] $2,809.55 for 1912,[5] and $6,586.83 for 1913,[6] or a total of $37,430.46. Naturally the city educational tax after 1909 remained at 25¢ until a future crisis demanded an increase, and this was already at hand.

The budget submitted in 1910 resulted in another legal tilt between the legislative council and the school board. The budget requested $540,603, of which amount $290,603 represented city taxes, exclusive of the sum of $83,169.50 for sinking funds and interest on the bonded debt, and the remainder represented income from the state and county taxes. The reasons stated for the demands were: an overdraft of $80,000, an increase of $60,000 in teacher salaries, the employment of more and specially trained teachers for the new high school, the extension of the system due to the annexation of 1909, the erection of three new school buildings now under construction and the consequent increase in the teacher personnel, and a general increase in enrollment.[7] The refusal of the city to recognize the legitimacy of these

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[1] Annual Report, 1907-08, op. cit., p. 6.

[2] The Commercial Appeal, Nov. 16, 1909.

[3] Annual Report, 1908-09, op. cit., p. 49.

[4] Ibid., 1910-11, p. 13.

[5] Auditor's Report, 1912-13. [6] Ibid.

[7] The Commercial Appeal, May 1, 1910.

budget demands and to increase the school tax resulted in a second mandamus suit. This suit represented the culmination of a long-standing dispute about the school bonds.

Every issue of school bonds previous to 1910 except that of 1889 embodies this proviso,

> That the Legislative Council . . . . is hereby given the irrepealable power and authority, and are directed in addition to the taxes levied by them for the maintenance of said schools or the payment of bonds heretofore issued by said school board, and now outstanding, to annually levy a tax sufficient to pay the interest on said bonds authorized to be issued by this act, as the same matures, and to create a sinking fund sufficient to pay the principal of said bonds at their maturity.[1]

The board contended that under this provision, repeated in each act legalizing the various bond issues, the interest and sinking funds should be deducted from the revenue derived from general taxes and not from that of school taxes. The city, however, maintained that both funds should be deducted from the revenue produced by the 25¢ tax rate. This latter practice had been followed since the first bonds were issued and the school board hoped to stop it and thereby augment the revenue available for current operation.

The new city charter of 1907 embraced a clause to the effect that a 25¢ school tax might be levied by the city to the exclusion of all other special levies for school purposes.[2] On this charter provision the city won the mandamus suit. The judge pointed out that,

> Whereas, it was incumbent to sustain the validity of contracts and obligations, and whereas the charter might be held unconstitutional with respect to this feature which would tend to obliterate the special taxes heretofore required for the payment of the school obligations, yet it was necessary for the court to look to the whole act to reconcile it with the requirements of the constitution, and doing this, it is found that the act provides another and sufficient manner of meeting these obligations, namely, by means of the 25¢ tax that is allowed to cover all school expenses.[3]

Later events were to prove the judge's error when he concluded that a 25¢ tax was sufficient to maintain the current expenses,

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[1] Acts of Tennessee, 1899, chap. 273, sec. 5, p. 655; 1903, chap. 376, sec. 5, p. 1111; 1905, chap. 340, sec. 5, p. 714; 1907, chap. 41, sec. 5, p. 141; 1909, chap. 238, sec. 5, p. 798.

[2] City Charter, 1907.

[3] The Commercial Appeal, July 13, 1910.

capital outlay, and debt services of a growing and expanding system.

Ordinarily, the elections of school board members had been nonpartisan and devoid of politics, but the election of 1912 proved otherwise. A complete board of five members was elected that had the favor, if not the open advocacy, of the city administration. This new board could not, however, assume office by a special ruling of the Supreme Court until the second Monday in January, 1914. A majority of three in the old board who were defeated for reëlection and were anti-administration, retained the power to control the schools for fourteen months after their defeat. The school deficit continued to mount and reached $210,000 by July, 1913. In March, 1913, the members of the board-elect addressed the mayor informing him that when they assumed office in January, 1914, they would probably inherit an overdraft of $180,000, and "your attention is called to this situation merely in justice to ourselves and that you may discuss the matter with the present board if you see fit."[1] At a conference between the city commission and the school board, the city denied the solution offered by the board of an increase in the city tax rate to 35¢,[2] and proposed no alternative. The Civic League, meeting at the Business Men's Club, held a public meeting when the closing of the schools was threatened. A committee from this organization was appointed to study the financial situation of the schools and to join hands with the school board in demanding a 35¢ tax rate.[3] This committee after having met with the city authorities, was accused by the club who appointed them of "instead of manfully demanding that the public voice be heeded . . . . they went there trembling like children who had sinned, and came away . . . . sharing the will of the mayor instead of the will of the mass meeting. . . . ."[4] The 1913 legislature closed, however, with no attempt having been made by the Shelby County delegation to obtain an increased tax rate.

One month after the opening of schools, October 1, 1913, the teachers were paid in school warrants, bearing six per cent interest. There being no cash on hand, the banks refused to honor these warrants because the board-elect and the city admin-

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[1] Ibid., Mar. 4, 1913.
[2] Ibid., Mar. 12, 1913.
[3] Ibid., Mar. 14, 1913.
[4] Ibid., July 21, 1913.

istration remained non-committal and refused any expression of their attitude toward the overdraft when the board-elect should have been inducted into office January 14, 1914. Under the sanctity of contracts, the new board could not upon entering office repudiate the contracts of the old board, nevertheless, banks refuse to loan money on contracts which invite lawsuits.

At practically all meetings of the old board, members of the board-elect were invited to attend and usually did. Throughout August and September the board-elect continued to propose that three members of the old board resign and in their stead three members of the new board be elected, giving them control of the board, and all warrants would be honored and paid within twenty-four hours, a procedure sanctioned by the charter. Three members of the old board remained adamant in their refusal to resign saying that they would never resign since they had been publicly accused of being extravagant with public funds and poor managers of a public trust.

The city administration finally proposed, instead of a city increase of school tax from 25¢ to 35¢, an additional county school tax of 25¢. The city proportion of this yield would be about $165,000.[1] In a special session of the state legislature during the fall of 1913, legislation to this effect was passed.[2] Immediately after this legislation the board-elect publicly announced that they would upon induction into office guarantee the warrants issued by the old board for salaries.[3] Thus the credit of the board was honored by the banks and the warrants for payrolls throughout October, November, and December were receivable at par value.

Upon assuming office the new board soon discovered that the problem was not one of more economical administration, but rather the disproportionate growth between fundamental education needs on the one hand and school revenue on the other. The budget drawn in May, 1914, for council approval showed a disparity of $300,000 in anticipated expenditures over anticipated receipts,[4] and accordingly the request was again made for a 35¢ city tax. Eventually it was agreed between the council and the board that a

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[1] Ibid., Sept. 11, 1913.

[2] Ibid., Oct. 12, 1913.

[3] Ibid., Oct. 31, 1913.

[4] Ibid., May 31, 1914.

bond issue of $325,000 would be authorized to wipe out the deficit and in lieu of a tax increase, the city would advance $15,000 extra, provided the board found a way to absorb the remaining anticipated debt of $32,000 not provided for in the bond issue.[1] As a consequence of this action the operating expenses of the board were increased with no revenue to offset the increase and to take care of the deficit which was growing month by month and year by year.

In November, 1916, the board facing a future overdraft at the close of the school year of $165,000 requested the new mayor, T. C. Ashcroft, to provide in the next legislative program an increase in city school tax of 10¢ and in that of the county of 5¢, and a bond issue of $500,000, half of which was to be used for construction and the remainder to absorb the deficit and other urgent needs.[2]

Most school board elections in Memphis have attracted little attention, but that of November, 1916, was an exception. Two tickets, both claiming to be nonpartisan were offered and both embraced women candidates. Mounting deficits year after year, inadequate housing, low salary scale paid teachers, and the refusal of the city to provide an adequate income were presented forcibly to the public. Three candidates from one ticket and two from the other were elected including three men and two women, the first women ever to hold this office.[3] So provocative was the agitation for education improvement that the representatives from eight commercial and civic clubs of the city held meetings and endorsed a $500,000 bond issue and a city education tax of 50¢.[4]

In response to public demands the Shelby County delegation secured a legislative enactment amending the city charter so that 40¢ instead of 25¢ might be assessed for public education. The City Council, thereupon, ordained a rate of 36¢ and provoked a storm in the education circles of Memphis.

The grammar school teachers, in view of this increased revenue, petitioned the board for a 33 1/3 per cent increase in

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[1] Ibid., Mar. 25, 1915, and June 15, 1915.

[2] Ibid., Nov. 10, 1916. [3] Ibid., Nov. 9, 1916.

[4] Ibid., Dec. 29, 1916.

salary in October, 1917. The board, in spite of the increased income, was without the financial ability to pay the additional compensation, but appreciating the justice of the petition, did, upon the insistence of the teachers and the 2,500 petitioning taxpayers, pass the following resolution:

> Resolved, that the petition of the grammar grade teachers, and citizens in their behalf, to fix the salaries of grammar grade teachers (white and colored) at 33 1/3 per cent additional to that now allowed and paid, be granted--provided, that, being now without available and adequate means to now pay the same, the additional salaries so fixed are to be paid by the city of Memphis, and collected by the teachers in such ways as may be in accordance with the law.[1]

A city ordinance for the next school year raised the school tax to 39¢. How much influence the teachers had in procuring this increase is not known.

Nevertheless, in September, 1918, when school opening was to be resumed without a salary increase to the grammar school teachers, a teacher strike ensued. The teachers' contentions were, that they had received no increase since being placed on a twelve months' pay in 1909, that they had been promised a raise when the tax rate was raised from 25¢ to 35¢ but though the tax rate did increase this amount, the salary scale remained the same, and that now the increase was 14¢ instead of 10¢ and still there was no salary adjustment to meet the inflated living cost, in a period of war.[2] The school board having just completed a school year with $100,000 deficit,[3] responded with the only answer possible to make and fulfill:

> Resolved, that the Board of Education will at once endeavor to secure from the legislative delegation and the city commissioners the agreement to have a bill passed to levy a 50¢ school tax; second, that the Board of Education will, as soon as this bill is passed, immediately make arrangements to pay an increase in salary beginning September, 1918; third, that the bill to be passed by the legislature will convey authority for the Board of Education to use the necessary portion of this tax fund to pay back-salary increases dated from September 1, 1918.[4]

A resolution was also adopted to enlist the endorsement and cooperation of all civic and business organizations in the proposed move for a 50¢ tax.[5]

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[1] Ibid., Oct. 24, 1917. [2] Ibid., Sept. 12, 1918.
[3] Ibid., Sept. 18, 1918. [4] Ibid., Sept. 14, 1918.
[5] Ibid.

In the meantime the board had instructed their legal council to prepare to file a lawsuit against the city commission for the payment of $1,000,000 to the board of education, representing the amount illegally withheld by the city from the city education taxes to provide for the interest and sinking funds on school bonds issued from 1889 to 1911[1] (Table 17, p. 81).

After four days' absence from the schoolroom, the strike was settled when the city council went on record as supporting the position previously taken by the board of education. Unanimously the commissioners resolved,

> That . . . . The Board of Commissioners pledge themselves to the Shelby County legislative delegation an increase in the tax rate for schools of 10¢, making the authorized tax 50¢, so as to insure to the teachers a substantial increase in their salaries. In consideration of this resolution the Board agreed to withdraw their $1,000,000 suit.[2]

In February, 1919, following the state legislature authorized a mandatory tax for Memphis city schools of 50¢,[3] and the board of education increased the pay of its grammar school teachers $10 per month, the raise being retroactive to September 1, 1918. This bill also settled the controversy about the interest and sinking funds of school board bonds.

More important than the small pecuniary benefits attained by the teachers from these two years of strife and discord is the awakened public interest in the future welfare of local public education. Several lay organizations made surveys of school conditions; notable among these were that of the city building inspector,[4] The Memphis Federation of Parents and Teachers, The Memphis and Shelby County Medical Society,[5] and The Rotary Club.[6] A brief summary of the findings of these reports reveals:

1. That most of the frame annexes were fire traps.
2. Many classes inhabited basement rooms and hallways which were poorly lighted, ventilated and heated.
3. Rickety stairways and splintered floors were common.
4. Overcrowding ranged from 15 to 150 per cent in excess of

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid., Sept. 18, 1918.

[3] Private Acts of Tennessee, 1919, chap. 186, sec. 1, pp. 441-442.

[4] The Commercial Appeal, Jan. 28, 1919.

[5] Ibid., Feb. 19, 1919. [6] Ibid., Feb. 12, 1919.

the capacity of the buildings.

5. Some buildings had no lunchrooms and in some, children were compelled to sit on concrete floors because of the absence of furniture.
6. No assembly rooms were present in many buildings.
7. Insanitary and inadequate toilet facilities existed.
8. Leaky roofs were found in several instances.
9. No wash basins.
10. Insufficient and incompetent janitor service, and
11. Impassable approaches to some schools in bad weather.

The Rotary Club interested themselves more than any other organization in proposing a remedy. They proposed the creation of a commission of five men to be empowered legally to control the investment in school properties in both the city of Memphis and the county of Shelby and to issue bonds to the extent of $2,000,000 for construction, to have the power within a maximum limit to set both the city and county school tax rates, and to invite the National Bureau of Education to make a complete survey of the Memphis and Shelby County School systems.[1] This plan was considered untenable and was rejected by the school board. Its proposal, however, led to a joint meeting between the school board, the city commission, and the Rotary Club, at which meeting the legislature was petitioned for authority to issue $500,000 school bonds for repair and new construction,[2] which bill was passed by the same legislature which permitted the 50¢ tax rate.

Thus ended the twenty years from 1900 to 1920 which may be characterized as a period of educating those legally charged with the governmental affairs of the city in attaining a perspective of the legitimate share the city schools should have in a growing and prosperous city. Lest a judgment too severe be cast on the municipal government, let it be remembered that every city administration upon assuming office worked in the shadow of those dark days of dishonored debts arising from war, disease, excessive bonds and taxation. School board bonds have been sold recently at rates of one per cent. Memphis today enjoys a preferred credit in financial circles of America.

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[1] Ibid., Mar. 4, 1919. [2] Ibid., Mar. 19, 1919.

Restoration--The Period, 1920 to 1944

This period embraces the 10 years previous and subsequent to the national depression beginning about 1930. Several factors set the stage for the readjustments forced upon the board in 1932. Following World War I, and continuing for 12 years thereafter, the bonded indebtedness of the schools was increased about 260 per cent while the income of the board increased only about 98 per cent.[1] This, of course, increased the cost of debt service and proportionately reduced the funds available for operating expenses. This period represents the greatest building program in the entire history of the Memphis schools. The pace set by more buildings, more pupils, more janitors, and more teachers in this rapidly expanding period outdistanced the increment of incoming revenue occasioned by the physical growth of taxable values. Teachers' salaries were increased 15 per cent during this period. The lag of six months between the fiscal year of the city and that of the schools left the school board each year without funds the last few months of its budget year. This deficiency of funds caused the board each year to borrow $500,000 to $800,000 on short-term notes at rates approximating six per cent. This practice over a period of years increased the amount assigned to debt service. School budgets were built upon the anticipation of 100 per cent collection in taxes; but as the shadows of the depression grew darker in 1930, 1931, and 1932, tax collections fell to about 75 per cent. When the banks refused to extend credit to the school board, on short-term notes, and the teachers had to be paid in scrip, a crisis was at hand.

The board inaugurated a program of retrenchment in order to balance their expenditures with actual income. Beginning with the school year of 1932-33 the total operating expenses show a decrease for five consecutive years.[2] Every item in each category of the budget which would submit to reduction was reduced. Of the reduction made ($628,574, not including fixed charges), 86.5 per cent of this amount, or $544,056, was taken from instruc-

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[1]Unpublished Financial Record of the Board of Education.

[2]Audit, Board of Education, Memphis City Schools, June 30, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937.

tional service. By not filling vacated positions, 107 teaching positions were eliminated. Only $84,518, or 13.5 per cent, was reduced from all other budget divisions.

In realizing these reductions the following are some of the advantages attained: The budgets were built on a more reliable estimate of income, short-term borrowing was avoided, the issuance of bonds was stopped from 1931 to 1937, capital outlay to debt service was reduced, refunding of the bonded debt was avoided, pension obligations to teachers were sustained, and faith was re-established in the solvency of the board's finances.

TABLE 19

REDUCTIONS MADE IN OPERATING EXPENSES BY BUDGET DIVISIONS BETWEEN 1932 AND 1937

Budget Divisions	1932[a]	1937[b]	Amount of Decrease	Per Cent Decrease
Administrative.....	$ 48,906	$ 39,677	$ 9,229	19.7
Instruction.....	1,951,279	1,407,223	544,056	27.3
Co-ordinate.....	15,525	7,238	8,287	53.3
Auxiliary.....	15,204	12,388	2,816	18.5
Operation of plants	189,241	130,162	59,079	31.2
Maintenance.....	43,845	38,738	5,107	11.2
Fixed charges.....	463,153	548,048	+84,895	+18.3
Total operating expenses.....	$2,727,153	$2,183,474	$543,679	19.9

[a] Audit, Board of Education, Memphis City Schools, June 30, 1932.

[b] Ibid., June 30, 1937.

These reductions also brought certain penalties: teacher salaries were reduced 16 2/3 per cent for a period of five years, supervisory services were curtailed, the office of assistant principal was abolished in certain schools, the purchase of free textbooks for five years, was virtually suspended, and many convenient, but dispensable, services were abolished.

The school year 1936-37 ended the retrenchment in school expenditures, and thereafter all divisions of the budget showed a steady increase. The cut of 16 2/3 per cent in teachers' salaries

TABLE 20

INCREASES MADE IN OPERATING EXPENSES BY BUDGET DIVISIONS BETWEEN 1937 AND 1944

Budget Divisions	1937[a]	1944[b]	Amount of Increase	Per Cent of Increase
Administrative.....	$ 39,677	$ 50,533	$ 10,856	27.4
Instruction.....	1,407,223	2,191,879	784,656	55.7
Co-ordinate.....	7,238	17,670	10,432	14.4
Auxiliary.....	12,388	23,854	11,466	92.5
Operation of plants	130,162	224,052	93,890	72.1
Maintenance.....	38,738	110,427	71,689	185.6
Fixed charges.....	548,048	485,256	62,797	11.4
Total operating expenses.....	$2,183,474	$3,103,666	$920,193	42.1

[a] Audit, Board of Education, Memphis City Schools, June 30, 1937.

[b] Ibid., June 30, 1944.

has not only been restored but each teacher now receives an annual supplement of $500. During the past seven years instruction service has increased 55.7 per cent, administrative control 27.4 per cent, co-ordinate activities 14.4 per cent, auxiliary services 92.5 per cent, operation of school plants 72.1 per cent, plant maintenance 185.6 per cent, and fixed charges (including debt service) decreased 11.4 per cent. The total increase in all expenditures has been 42.1 per cent (Table 20).

Beginning with the school year of 1932-33 and continuing through that of 1943-44, the income of the School Board has exhibited an almost continuous increase with each succeeding year. Two years after the start of the retrenchment program the books, in 1934, showed a balance. This surplus of income over expenditures has averaged $364,817 annually for the past eleven years. From these savings $2,646,102 has been transferred to the building fund and pension fund. These capital savings and bond issues to the amount of $596,000,[1] augmented by the "New Deal" legisla-

[1] Audit, Board of Education, Memphis City Schools, 1944, p. 14.

tion has enabled the board to bring to completion a building program which has housed all pupils, white and colored, in comfortable, hygienic, brick buildings. Furthermore, the pension fund, which is one of the most liberal among city school systems, is now secured and supported with adequate capital reserve.

TABLE 21

SCHOOL BOARD INCOME, EXPENDITURES, BALANCE AND TRANSFERS FROM 1933 TO 1944*

Year	Income	Expenditures	Balance	Transfers
1933.....	$1,962,359	$2,315,450	.....	.....
1934.....	2,327,884	2,215,711	$ 112,174	.....
1935.....	2,227,855	2,192,336	35,518	.....
1936.....	2,547,192	2,184,212	362,980	$ 190,135
1937.....	2,639,208	2,183,475	545,733	65,062
1938.....	2,972,992	2,294,660	678,332	131,111
1939.....	2,788,780	2,468,796	319,983	44,235
1940.....	3,012,712	2,523,038	489,674	576,744
1941.....	2,953,736	2,550,145	403,590	341,039
1942.....	3,214,152	2,642,437	571,716	846,300
1943.....	3,155,261	2,834,473	320,788	325,000
1944.....	3,276,211	3,103,666	172,545	126,476
Total.			$4,012,993	$2,646,102

*Audit, Board of Education, Memphis City Schools, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944.

The present sources of public school revenue is the final consideration in this survey of school finance. Education revenue is derived from five sources, namely, the city school taxes, the apportionment from county school taxes, the state appropriations, the federal funds to aid in the support of certain vocational education programs, and the income from miscellaneous sources such as fees, rentals, sales, etc.

It is evident from Table 22 that 2/3 of the school revenue is derived from local taxes, 1/4 from county taxes, and 1/10 from state apportionments. Other sources of revenue are negligible being less than 1 per cent. Under present economic conditions

TABLE 22

PER CENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOL REVENUE RECEIVED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES FROM 1934 TO 1944

Year	Sources				
	City	County	State	Federal	Miscellaneous
1935.....	69.5	25.1	4.8	.4	.2
1936.....	71.8	23.5	4.2	.2	.2
1937.....	73.6	22.0	4.2	.1	.1
1938.....	66.5	21.0	11.6	.9	.1
1939.....	63.0	23.7	12.4	.8	.1
1940.....	64.4	22.5	12.2	.7	.1
1941.....	66.0	21.5	12.1	.6	.1
1942.....	66.2	21.7	11.3	.6	.1
1943.....	66.2	20.5	11.9	.7	.3
1944.....	63.3	21.4	13.4	1.2	.3
Average...	66.9	22.2	10.4	.6	.2

state aid has about reached the saturation point for several years to come and the city cannot look to this source for future increase of bounties. From the local city and county governments must come 90 per cent of all education support. Any future expansions or crises must be sustained chiefly from city levies. The present levy of 65¢ per $100 evaluation has existed without alteration for almost 20 years.

CHAPTER V

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL CONTROL

The transfer of the powers of school management from municipal to lay representatives was achieved during the first ten years of the existence of the system, but the accomplishment of a similar transfer from the lay board to professional functionaries, employed by the board, required approximately seventy-five years. This section of the investigation is a study of the rise and decline of the powers and duties of all of those functionaries who in the course of time have exercised control in school administration. The different causes underlying successive changes are also a subject for study.

Aldermanic Control

In the beginning the state legislature authorized the city council to administer the schools. From January to June, 1848, the aldermen in each ward were accorded permissive power by the council to organize a school in their respective wards. Upon the ward aldermen was bestowed the power to rent the school quarters, provide the furniture, select the teacher, establish the salary, and to do all acts necessary to establish and operate the schools, provided all such acts were approved by the board of mayor and aldermen.[1]

This exclusive aldermanic control was somewhat modified by the ordinance of June 19, 1848. This ordinance created a board of managers for all the schools consisting of the mayor and two aldermen and two citizens appointed by the mayor. To this board of managers was delegated by the council the power to provide schoolhouses, employ teachers, fix their salaries, provide for the internal government of the schools, and to report quarterly to the council the fiscal condition, the enrollment, and all information deemed necessary by the council concerning the

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[1] Minutes of the City Council, Jan. 21, 1848.

schools.[1]

During the first few years of public education, several changes succeeded each other in rapid succession. In July, 1848, the city council ordained that one more alderman and one more citizen should be added to the board of managers, that a superintendent should be appointed, and that the managers should draw up a code of rules and regulations.[2] After a few months the board of managers was succeeded by three special committees of aldermen, one for the North Memphis Schools, one for the South Memphis Schools, and a third for the central part of the city.[3] By 1850, a committee on education composed exclusively of aldermen had charge of all the schools.

Lay control had its beginning in 1852. By ordinance, the committee on education could appoint seven citizens to make recommendations to the committee and to the council for the improvement of school administration. This joint board of aldermen and citizens was termed the board of school visitors. They were empowered to hold office for one year, to adopt by-laws for their own government and for the teachers and officers of the board, to appoint and remove all school teachers and officers, to keep a complete set of records, and to report to the council at the end of each session.[4]

This lay control had become complete by 1858. The charter of that year made the board a political corporation of the state, composed of one citizen from each ward elected by popular vote.[5] By the charter of 1866, the number of board members was doubled by the election of two instead of one member by each ward.[6] Legally, the political corporation thus formed was made completely independent of the municipal corporation in all respects except one, namely, that of establishing the tax rate and the collection of the revenue for public education. This prerogative has ever remained invested in the city government.

Irrespective of all changes that a century has evolved

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[1] Ibid., June 19, 1848. [2] Ibid., July 1, 1848.

[3] Ibid., Oct. 21, 1848. [4] Ibid., Dec. 21, 1852.

[5] Public Acts of Tennessee, 1857-58, chap. 170, sec. 2, p. 400.

[6] Acts of Tennessee, 1866-67, chap. 8, p. 15.

in the organization of school control, the city government has retained budgetary control over the schools. Each year the school board has been required by law to submit its anticipated expenditures to the city commission for approval. The local tax rate for support of schools is fixed by the municipal corporation and not by the school board corporation, likewise, the collection of such taxes. Indirectly, then, the city government can exercise that which amounts to final control over such important matters as school buildings, teacher salaries, and all major items of school costs. Chapters III and IV have shown how complete this control has been. Although the school board has always been dependent upon the city government for school revenue, they have retained almost completely their independence in controlling the internal affairs of the schools.

Officers of the Board

President

The ordinance of December, 1852, which added seven citizens to the board of school visitors, gave the board power to elect their own president and secretary. The following February Dr. A. P. Merrill became the first president. Irrespective of the many changes wrought in school board organization by new charters or amendments to old charters or by modifications of th rules and regulations of the board, the office of school board president has remained the controlling power in school administration. Practically without exception the men who have held this important office during the ninety-one years represented in Table 23 have been men of culture, education, and ability, distinguished in business or professional life, and benefactors in their contributions to the social, civic, and cultural development of the city. Nowhere do the records disclose any trickery, collusion, or questionable dealings carried on by the board in its one hundred years of existence.

By 1868 the powers of the president of the board may be summarized as follows:

1. To preside at all meetings of the board of education.
2. To appoint all standing committees.
3. To issue calls for special meetings of the board whenever he deems them necessary.

TABLE 23

SUCCESSION OF SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENTS, MEMPHIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Year	Name	Year	Name
1853.....	A. P. Merrill	1899.....	J. H. Peres
1854.....	A. P. Merrill	1900.....	J. E. Beasley
1855.....	A. P. Merrill	1901.....	J. M. Steen
1856.....	J. H. McMahon	1902.....	J. M. Steen
1857.....	G. R. Grant	1903.....	C. J. O'Neil
1858.....	T. W. Preston	1904.....	C. W. Edmonds
1859.....	Jno. A. Nooe	1905.....	O. I. Kruger
1860.....	Jno. A. Nooe	1906.....	G. B. Malone
1861.....	G. R. Grant	1907.....	E. A. Neely
1862.....	James Elder	1908.....	C. C. Ogilvie
1863.....	S. T. Morgan	1909.....	J. M. Steen
1864.....	S. T. Morgan	1910.....	G. B. Malone
1865.....	J. J. Peres	1911.....	G. B. Malone
1866.....	H. H. Higbee	1912.....	G. B. Malone
1867.....	H. D. Connell	1913.....	G. B. Malone
1868.....	J. T. Leath	1914.....	J. P. Norfleet
1869.....	Thos. R. Smith	1915.....	J. P. Norfleet
1870.....	R. B. Maury	1916.....	J. P. Norfleet
1871.....	W. Z. Mitchell	1917.....	J. P. Norfleet
1872.....	Chas. Kortrecht	1918.....	Hardwig Peres
1873.....	Chas. Kortrecht	1919.....	Hardwig Peres
1874.....	Chas. Kortrecht	1920.....	Hardwig Peres
1875.....	R. W. Mitchell	1921.....	Hardwig Peres
1876.....	W. A. Goodman	1922.....	L. C. Humes
1877.....	W. A. Goodman	1923.....	L. C. Humes
1878.....	W. C. Folkes	1924.....	L. C. Humes
1879.....	W. C. Folkes	1925.....	L. C. Humes
1880.....	G. V. Rambaut	1926.....	W. J. Prescott
1881.....	G. V. Rambaut	1927.....	W. J. Prescott
1882.....	G. V. Rambaut	1928.....	W. J. Prescott
1883.....	G. V. Rambaut	1929.....	W. J. Prescott
1884.....	G. V. Rambaut	1930.....	W. J. Prescott
1885.....	R. D. Jordon	1931.....	W. J. Prescott
1886.....	R. D. Jordon	1932.....	W. J. Prescott
1887.....	R. D. Jordon	1933.....	W. J. Prescott
1888.....	R. D. Jordon	1934.....	W. J. Prescott
1889.....	R. D. Jordon	1935.....	W. J. Prescott
1890.....	R. D. Jordon	1936.....	W. J. Prescott
1891.....	R. D. Jordon	1937.....	W. J. Prescott
1892.....	G. V. Rambaut	1938.....	W. J. Prescott
1893.....	G. V. Rambaut	1939.....	W. J. Prescott
1894.....	F. B. Hunter	1940.....	W. J. Prescott
1895.....	J. E. Beasley	1941.....	W. J. Prescott
1896.....	Unknown	1942.....	W. J. Prescott
1897.....	A. W. Higgins	1943.....	W. J. Prescott
1898.....	J. E. Beasley	1944.....	W. J. Prescott

4. To act as the organ of communication between the school board and the city authorities.
5. To visit each school under the control of the board at least once each year.
6. To countersign all warrants on the treasury.
7. To be an ex-officio member of all standing and extra committees.
8. To be coördinate, ex-officio superintendent.
9. To exercise a general supervision over the interests of education throughout all the organizations of the city.
10. To make an annual report to the board each year which should be published.
11. To be allowed a compensation whenever, in the opinion of the board, his services have occupied time deserving of compensation.[1]

A pattern developed early whereby the president was more intimately identified with the fiscal administration than with any other phase of school control; the school building program was second in importance in the occupation of his time. Naturally, this made him the business spokesman of the schools. As seen in Chapter III, the struggle to house the pupils is as old as the system itself and has been its most difficult problem. Likewise, in Chapter IV, the fight to obtain adequate financial support from the city government was seen to be a struggle one hundred years old. Those thirty-seven men enumerated in Table 23 have had to bear the major burden and to accept the brunt of battle before the council, before the legislature, and before all civic organizations of the city to plead the cause of the schools. When failures ensued, the records show that such failures were not due to any lack of acumen or zeal; on the contrary, such records bear testimony that these men were able advocates of the cause of education. They appeared before legislative committees, the city council, and civic organizations with incontrovertible facts and figures pertaining to the schools and the school needs.

With the full development of the powers and duties of the office of superintendent, many of these powers of the president were delegated to the superintendent. From 1920, therefore, the superintendent has become more and more and the president less

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[1] Minutes of the School Board, July 6, 1868.

and less the chief officer to whom is committed the administration of fiscal affairs, the planning of the building program, and the direction of public relations.

An abrupt departure from the accepted practice over the country and a complete break with past local precedent was inaugurated in 1941. By amendment to the charter, the school board president was made a full time officer with a salary comparable to that of the superintendent.[1] The president is now in more complete charge than ever before of finances, purchase of supplies, construction, repair and maintenance of buildings.

Vice-President

The office of vice-president has carried with it no powers not shared by all other regular board members except that of discharging the duties of the president in case of his absence or incapacity.

Secretary

The charter of 1858 authorized the school board to appoint a secretary from "within or without their body."[2] This is the first act legalizing this office. For the first ten years after this act the secretary was a member of the board, was paid a nominal salary, and worked only on a part time basis. By 1868, however, the secretary was elected from without the board, his salary was increased, the office approached full time demands, and it attained professional status.

During this same year his duties were:

1. To attend all board meetings.
2. To draw warrants on the treasury for all appropriations.
3. To keep a full and faithful record of all board proceedings.
4. To file and keep safely all reports, communications, books documents, and papers of the board.
5. To keep a regular set of books of all receipts and expenditures.
6. To furnish statistics for the annual report.
7. To keep a record of all examinations and certificates is-

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[1] Private Acts of Tennessee, 1941, pp. 164-166.

[2] Public Acts of Tennessee, 1857-58, chap. 107, sec. 3, p. 400.

sued to teachers.

8. To take the annual school census.
9. To issue notices of all called and regular meetings of the board and of the committees of the board.
10. To act as messenger for the board.
11. To keep such records as might be necessary to show the change and progress of the schools,
12. To act as librarian for the teachers' association.
13. To be custodian of all school supplies and to keep a record of amounts of supplies furnished each school.
14. To be under bond.[1]

So long as the office of secretary was held by board members, the terms of office were naturally short, due to the rapid turnover in board membership. By reference to Table 24, it may

TABLE 24

SUCCESSION OF SCHOOL BOARD SECRETARIES, MEMPHIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Year	Name	Year	Name	Year	Name
1857)		1886	A. B. Hill	1916	A. B. Hill
1858)		1887	A. B. Hill	1917	A. B. Hill
1859)	Names not known	1888	A. B. Hill	1918	G. W. Garner
1860)		1889	A. B. Hill	1919	G. W. Garner
1861)		1890	A. B. Hill	1920	G. W. Garner
1862	Isaac Clark	1891	A. B. Hill	1921	G. W. Garner
1863	Isaac Clark	1892	A. B. Hill	1922	G. W. Garner
1864	Isaac Clark	1893	A. B. Hill	1923	G. W. Garner
1865	Isaac Clark	1894	A. B. Hill	1924	G. W. Garner
1866	F.W.Buttinghaus	1895	A. B. Hill	1925	G. W. Garner
1867	F.W.Buttinghaus	1896	A. B. Hill	1926	G. W. Garner
1868	F. J. Atwell and	1897	A. B. Hill	1927	G. W. Garner
	W. T. Waters	1898	A. B. Hill	1928	G. W. Garner
1869	J. G. Cairns	1899	A. B. Hill	1929	G. W. Garner
1870	J. G. Cairns	1900	A. B. Hill	1930	G. W. Garner
1871	J. G. Cairns	1901	A. B. Hill	1931	G. W. Garner
1872	J. G. Cairns	1902	A. B. Hill	1932	E. C. Ball
1873	J. G. Cairns	1903	A. B. Hill	1933	E. C. Ball
1874	J. G. Cairns	1904	A. B. Hill	1934	E. C. Ball
1875	J. G. Cairns	1905	A. B. Hill	1935	O. B. Ellis
1876	J. G. Cairns	1906	A. B. Hill	1936	O. B. Ellis
1877	W. R. McClune	1907	A. B. Hill	1937	O. H. Jones
1878	W. R. McClune	1908	A. B. Hill	1938	O. H. Jones
1879	W. R. McClune	1909	A. B. Hill	1939	O. H. Jones
1880	W. R. McClune	1910	A. B. Hill	1940	O. H. Jones
1881	W. R. McClune	1911	A. B. Hill	1941	O. H. Jones
1882	A. B. Hill	1912	A. B. Hill	1942	O. H. Jones
1883	A. B. Hill	1913	A. B. Hill	1943	O. H. Jones
1884	A. B. Hill	1914	A. B. Hill	1944	O. H. Jones
1885	A. B. Hill	1915	A. B. Hill		

[1] Sixteenth Annual Report, 1867-68, op. cit., p. 16.

be noted that Isaac Clark was the only secretary previous to 1868 to hold the office for any length of time. Upon the professionalization of the office, however, only seven men have occupied this important administrative office during the past seventy-six years--an average tenure of eleven years. This fact alone is proof that the office has been singularly free from politics. In addition to secretarial duties, the entire records of business management devolved upon the office, and in later years, the incumbent became known as the secretary and business manager of the school board, and as such became a line and staff officer in school administration.

Treasurer

Previous to the charter of 1858, there was no need for a school board treasurer, because during the first ten years of public education in Memphis, all school expenses were paid by the mayor and the board of aldermen upon warrants attested by the superintendent and countersigned by the president.[1] After this date, however, the school board treasurer was created with legal status. He is elected, and his compensation, duties, and powers are determined by the board.[2] His duties in 1876 were defined as follows:

1. To be an officer in such bank as will give bond and security in such amount as the board may fix.
2. To collect all moneys and securities belonging to the board.
3. To report collections weekly to the secretary.
4. To hold all funds, subject to the orders of the board, signed by its secretary and president.
5. To submit at each monthly meeting of the board a statement of all moneys received, paid out, and the balance left.
6. To keep an account of all receipts and disbursements.
7. To keep a file of all warrants drawn on him.[3]

The duties of the treasurer have remained substantially the same from that date to the present.

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[1] Public Acts of the State of Tennessee, 1857-58, chap. 170, pp. 400-402.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Twenty-fifth Annual Report, 1875-76, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

Standing Committees of the Board

Standing committees first came into existence with the first charter of 1856 incorporating the school board. The early conception of school administration was that the board should exercise direct supervision over the examination, certification and appointment of teachers; the selection of textbooks; the renting, construction, and repair of schoolhouses; the letting of contracts involving school supplies; the appropriation of all money; and the auditing of all school accounts. The secretary was merely a clerk to assist the board in these matters. The superintendent might be and often was an advisory officer to the board in these affairs, but his primary duty was to superintend instruction, to visit the schools, and to direct pupil administration and teacher activities. To enable the board to manage all these undertakings, a division of labor was found necessary, and in 1857, the records disclose four standing committees, one to receive applications from and to examine all applicants for the position of teachers, a second to select the school books, a third to secure suitable school rooms, and a fourth to audit accounts.[1]

The high point in number of committees utilized by the board was attained in 1875, six years after a change in the charter doubled the board membership by authorizing the election of two members from each ward.[2] The annual report of that year enumerates eight standing committees as follows:

1. Purchasing.
2. Auditing.
3. Finance.
4. School buildings and grounds.
5. Teachers.
6. Textbooks and apparatus.
7. Appeals and qualification of teachers.
8. Rules and regulations.[3]

These committees exalted the importance of the individual board member. Their powers and duties were defined in an elaborate

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[1] Appeal, op. cit., Aug. 6, 1857.

[2] Acts of Tennessee, 1868-69, pp. 137-142.

[3] Annual Report, 1875-76, op. cit., p. 26.

code prepared by the committee on rules and regulations and adopted by the board. These committees grew jealous of their power and became a potent agency in school administration. In an abbreviated form the powers and duties of these committees are recited:

The Purchasing Committee shall contract for, and purchase all articles required to furnish the schools.[1]

The Auditing Committee shall (1) examine all bills and claims presented against the board and report same to the board audited and approved or rejected with reasons for rejections, and (2) once a month, examine the books, inventories, accounts, and vouchers of the secretary and treasurer and report their correctness to the board.[2]

The Finance Committee shall (1) provide for the revenue to maintain the schools, and (2) draw up the budget of expenses and income for each ensuing year.[3]

The Committee on Building and Grounds shall (1) have charge of locating, erecting, and furnishing all new buildings, (2) repair and remodel old buildings, (3) submit plans and estimates of all these to the board, (4) see that all work is executed as per contract, (5) require approved security for execution of contracts, and (6) solicit sealed bids for all purchases for over $50.[4]

The Committee on Teachers shall (1) have charge of the examination of all applicants, (2) report to the board upon those examined.[5]

The Committee on Textbooks and Apparatus shall (1) make a report on textbooks and courses of study, advocating any changes deemed proper, (2) have general supervision of the library, and (3) recommend from time to time the purchase of books and apparatus.[6]

The Committee on Appeals shall (1) hear and investigate all cases of difficulty or misunderstanding between teachers, parents and teachers, teachers and principals, superintendent and others, (2) have charges placed in writing, (3) permit both par-

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[1] Ibid., p. 33. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., 1882-83, p. 38. [5] Ibid., 1865-66, p. 91.

[6] Ibid., 1875-76, p. 34.

ties to the dispute to have a fair and impartial trial before the committee, (4) report their findings and recommendations to the board in writing.[1]

The Committee on Rules and Regulations shall take into careful consideration every proposition presented to the board to repeal or amend any rule or regulation whenever referred to them and shall report in writing their reasons for or against the proposed alteration.[2]

After the amendment to the school charter in 1883, which reduced the board membership to five members, the way was paved for the board to eventually become a legislative rather than an executive body. From 1883 to 1925, standing committees continued to exist, but they exercised steadily diminishing powers for several reasons, first, past experience with a large board and wrangling committees had condemned the practice; second, business and professional laymen had not the time to administer the details of a system extended by natural growth to magnitudinous size; third, new methods of city school administration demanded a line and staff organization of professional school men into whose hands the executive control of the school would be committed. By 1925, this transition was complete, and the superintendent became, in fact as in name, the chief executive officer of the board.

Line and Staff Officers

The Superintendent

The office of superintendent has been since the earliest inception of public education in Memphis the fountain head for the exercise of the board's power and authority. In less than two weeks after the ordinance of June 19, 1848, which launched the public school system in Memphis, another ordinance created the office of superintendent,[4] and a fortnight later the powers and duties of the office of superintendent were defined by ordinance,[5] to wit:

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[1] Ibid., 1865-66, p. 20. [2] Ibid., p. 90.

[3] Acts of the State of Tennessee, 1883, pp. 20-22.

[4] Minutes of the City Council, July 1, 1848.

[5] Ibid., July 18, 1848.

The superintendent shall,

1. See that each teacher opens and closes his school at the appointed hour.
2. See that the course of studies prescribed by the board of managers is pursued in each school.
3. See that all rules and regulations for the government of the schools are duly observed.
4. Visit the schools regularly and make himself acquainted with the course pursued in each school by the respective teachers.
5. Give tickets of admission to the pupils before they can enter the schools.
6. Attend the meetings of the board of managers to make such suggestions as his experience and observations may enable him to do for the benefit of the schools.
7. Report the teachers to the board of managers in all cases of wilful disregard or neglect by them of their duty.
8. Keep a correct record of the names of the pupils and their several studies.
9. Be able at all times to give to the city council or the board of managers all necessary information.
10. Report every quarter to the city council or board of managers and more often if required.
11. Suspend pupils for conduct requiring it, until the board of managers shall determine whether such pupils shall be expelled by rules prescribed by the board of managers.
12. Report teachers for misconduct or inefficiency.
13. Be responsible for the successful progress of the schools.
14. Assign each pupil to his school.
15. Distribute properly any books or stationery furnished the schools.

Ten years after a lay board had been legalized and committee organization of the board had become entrenched, the superintendent's duties were redefined and extended. First, to be eligible for the office of superintendent, one must present testimonials of good moral character, of thorough classical education, and of demonstrated administrative ability. Furthermore, he must submit to examination if required by the board. His duties were extended when, in addition to those previously recited, he was required to devote his time exclusively to his office, to

direct teachers in the best methods of instruction, and to be an ex-officio member of the committee on the examination and certification of teachers and of that on the selection of textbooks.[1]

The powers and duties of the superintendent continued to increase notwithstanding the increased committee organization of the board during the decade of the seventies. At the time corresponding to the reduction of the board from twenty to five members, in 1883, the rules and regulations of the board had added these further duties to the office of superintendent: to be the chief executive officer of the board and under its control to carry out all its rules and regulations; to study other city school systems and exchange documents with them in order to be a better student of public education and thereby be enabled to suggest means of improving the city schools; to advance pupils from the primary to the grammar and thence to the high school departments; to be ex-officio member of the committee on rules and regulations; to appoint and control the conduct of janitors; to make in writing a monthly report, as well as an annual report, in July to the board with recommendations; to visit each school (teacher) at least once each month; to keep all useful records including the name, age, address, nativity, grade, standing on examinations, transfer, suspension and expulsion of every pupil; to convene teachers and principals at least once each month for the purpose of instructing them in the best methods of instruction and discipline; to submit the payroll the first of each month to the finance committee; to make twice each year a complete invoice of all property belonging to the board; to suspend both pupils and teachers pending action of the board; to temporarily appoint special teachers to fill vacancies; to study the causes of truancy; and to keep regular office hours other than school hours.[2]

It took thirty-five years for the board of education, the city officials, and the public to see the futility of a large board, broken into committees each interfering with the executive authority which should be the prerogative of the superintendent and his professional assistants. Accordingly, the board was re-

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[1] Sixteenth Annual Report, 1867-68, op. cit., pp. 27-31.

[2] Annual Report, 1882-83, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

duced to five members. Committee organization, however, persisted for thirty-five more years after the board membership was reduced to five members. By the very nature of things, a small

TABLE 25

MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES, MEMPHIS CITY SCHOOLS, 1913-1914*

Committee	Dr.G.B.Malone President	P. H. Phelan Vice President	W.E.Edmondson	Chas. J. Haase	O. I. Kruger
Auditing.....	1	1	1	1	..
Buildings and grounds.	1	..	1	1	1
Finance.....	1	1	..	1	1
Insurance.....	1	1	1	..	1
Rules and suggestions.	1	1	..	1	1
Teachers and textbooks	1	..	1	1	1
Number of committees served on.....	6	4	4	5	5

*Rules and Regulations of the Public Schools of Memphis, 1913-1914, p. 3.

board would eventually be compelled to surrender administrative functions to professional officers of the board while the board itself became a legislative or policy forming body. By reference to Table 25, it is obvious that there was no such thing as separate committees, for of the six standing committees two members of the board served on five of them, two others served on four, and the president served on all six. Furthermore, each committee contained three board members in addition to the chairman and therefore commanded a majority. In reality the board as a whole was a standing committee on all school problems. Obviously, five board members engaged in an extensive private business or profession had no time to administer the perplexing problems experienced by Memphis in its period of most rapid growth, from 1900 to 1925.

Committees continued to be powerful agencies of school control or interference until about 1920 or 1925, but as the system increased, committee controls decreased. Powers relinquished by the committees were naturally inherited by the superintendent.

By 1914, the superintendent was ex-officio a member of all standing committees.

> All executive acts are the prerogative of the superintendent unless explicitly reserved for the board. The superintendent shall recommend the election and assignment of all teachers and principals to the committee on teachers and textbooks. He shall supervise the examination and certification of all teacher applicants. He shall have full authority over his assistants, teachers and principals. All official communications shall be addressed to the superintendent through the one next highest in the line of authority, and all communications to the board by its employees must be addressed to it through the superintendent.[1]

By these assignments of 1914, the powers of certain committees were rendered perfunctory, and the superintendent's office had become almost full grown in its executive functions. The board continued to hold large executive control over school finance and school buildings.

The agents of the United States Office of Education who conducted a survey of the Memphis City schools in 1919 after having recommended an improved method of nominating candidates for election to the board of education, prophesied:

> Such a board . . . . would recognize that there is a clear-cut line of demarcation between its own proper functions and the function of the office of superintendent. It would doubtless recognize that this matter of relationship between a board of directors and its chief executive and his corps of officers has already been well worked out in business practice; it would recognize that the primary function of a board is not executive but administrative and legislative, and that it can best serve the people of the city by determining policies and not by occupying its attention with the minutiae of details necessary to carrying defined policies into execution. It would see to it that the superintendent of schools, its chief executive officer, is an expert in all matters pertaining to school policies and practices, a person of vision, abreast of present day educational thought, with qualities of tactful initiative, and who thereby is in a position to give the board expert advice with respect to details. With such an executive officer, together with a corps of subordinates, each an expert in his or her particular field, the board of education could well content itself with giving consideration to the reports of these officers,

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[1] Rules and Regulations of the Public Schools of Memphis, Tenn., 1913-14, pp. 16-18.

passing upon policies, and leaving the execution of the details to the superintendent and his experts.[1]

Although the method of nominating board members which the survey staff condemned has remained practically unchanged, the proper functions of the board have largely become a reality. After 1920, the executive functions of standing committees became perfunctory, and after about 1930, such committees ceased even to be appointed. Having acquired executive command of practically all functions of school administration, except that of school construction and school finance, by 1920, the superintendent soon thereafter acquired these. During the tremendous building program which has been achieved between 1925 and 1940 calling for many land acquisitions, numerous new buildings, and additions by the dozens, the superintendent has been the one upon whom the board has relied for plans, and into whose hands have been delegated the details of their execution. During this same period of time, annual school expenditures jumped from $1,846,634 to $3,939,547, and the board depended upon the superintendent and his proper subordinates to draw up the budget for the board's approval, and to have authority to expend all budgeted appropriations without vote of the board but upon signature of the president and the secretary and business manager, except expenditures from the general appropriation. Specifically, of the 23 superintendents enumerated in Table 26, it may be concluded that the last two are the only two superintendents who have exercised completely the powers of chief executive officer.

The tenure of the office of superintendent has been extended as the executive powers have been expanded. A study of Table 26 shows that during the first thirty-two years of public education in Memphis, there were thirteen different superintendents or an average tenure of 2.4 years, but during the last sixty-four years there have been only 10 superintendents with an average tenure of 6.4 years. These sixty-four years coincide with the life span of the smaller five member board, an arrangement which rendered inevitable the expanding importance of the office of superintendent. The average tenure of the twenty-three different men who have occupied the office of superintendent since

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[1] Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education Bulletin, 1919, No. 50. In seven Parts, Part I, pp. 37-38.

TABLE 26

SUCCESSION OF SUPERINTENDENTS, MEMPHIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Year	Name	Year	Name
1848..	J. W. A. Pettit	1897.....	G. W. Gordon
1849..	J. W. A. Pettit	1898.....	G. W. Gordon
1850..	J. W. A. Pettit	1899.....	G. W. Gordon
1851..	J. W. A. Pettit	1900.....	G. W. Gordon
1852..	Dr. Ebbert	1901.....	G. W. Gordon
1853..	J. F. Pearl	1902.....	G. W. Gordon
1854..	L.G. Tarbox & S.H. Tobey	1903.....	G. W. Gordon
1855..	A. P. Merrill	1904.....	G. W. Gordon
1856..	A. P. Merrill	1905.....	G. W. Gordon
1857..	Le Roy Pope	1906.....	I. C. McNeil
1858..	Le Roy Pope	1907.....	I. C. McNeil
1859..	Le Roy Pope	1908.....	I. C. McNeil
1860..	Le Roy Pope	1909.....	I. C. McNeil
1861..	A. P. Merrill	1910.....	T. P. Bailey
1862..	Richard Hines	1911.....	W. S. Jones
1863..	Richard Hines	1912.....	L. E. Wolfe
1864..	Richard Hines	1913.....	L. E. Wolfe
1865..	W. Z. Mitchell	1914.....	N. M. Williams
1866..	W. Z. Mitchell	1915.....	A. A. Kincannon
1867..	W. Z. Mitchell	1916.....	A. A. Kincannon
1868..	W. Z. Mitchell	1917.....	A. A. Kincannon
1869..	J. T. Leath	1918.....	A. A. Kincannon
1870..	J. T. Leath	1919.....	W. S. Jones
1871..	H. C. Slaughter	1920.....	W. S. Jones
1872..	H. C. Slaughter	1921.....	W. S. Jones
1873..	A. Pickett	1922.....	W. S. Jones
1874..	A. Pickett	1923.....	R. L. Jones
1875..	A. Pickett	1924.....	R. L. Jones
1876..	J. T. Leath	1925.....	R. L. Jones
1877..	J. T. Leath	1926.....	R. L. Jones
1878..	W. H. Foute	1927.....	R. L. Jones
1879..	W. H. Foute	1928.....	R. L. Jones
1880..	C. H. Collier	1929.....	R. L. Jones
1881..	C. H. Collier	1930.....	R. L. Jones
1882..	C. H. Collier	1931.....	R. L. Jones
1883..	C. H. Collier	1932.....	R. L. Jones
1884..	C. H. Collier	1933.....	R. L. Jones
1885..	C. H. Collier	1934.....	R. L. Jones
1886..	C. H. Collier	1935.....	R. L. Jones
1887..	C. H. Collier	1936.....	E. C. Ball
1888..	C. H. Collier	1937.....	E. C. Ball
1889..	C. H. Collier	1938.....	E. C. Ball
1890..	C. H. Collier	1939.....	E. C. Ball
1891..	C. H. Collier	1940.....	E. C. Ball
1892..	G. W. Gordon	1941.....	E. C. Ball
1893..	G. W. Gordon	1942.....	E. C. Ball
1894..	G. W. Gordon	1943.....	E. C. Ball
1895..	G. W. Gordon	1944.....	E. C. Ball
1896..	G. W. Gordon		

1848 has been 4.2 years.

Not only tenure, but the type of man selected for superintendent has been affected by the evolution of increased executive duties. Of the thirteen superintendents between 1848 and 1880, only four are definitely known to have been school men. Of the other nine, three were lawyers; one was a physician; two were ministers, and three unclassified. Since 1880, however, only one superintendent has been selected from outside the teaching profession.

A spirit of provincialism seems to have prevailed in the selection of men for the office. Fourteen were native Memphians, six were from outside Memphis and the nativity of the other three is unknown. Four of the six who were imported were southerners who came from regions in close proximity to Memphis. Two of the imported men came from northern states, and the administration of both these superintendents was beset with undercurrents of sectionalism.

The Assistant Superintendent

Of all the administrative offices of the schools the office of assistant superintendent has been the most hectic. The office has been created, abolished and recreated more times than once. The duties as well as the title have undergone several changes.

The office of assistant superintendent had its inception in the movement immediately following the Civil War which extended the public school system to include colored as well as white children. The state law of March 5, 1867[1] extended the state school system to include Negro children. Under the compulsion of state law, the Memphis board of education undertook the education of the Negro youths when schools opened in September, 1868. At first, the board merely took over the colored schools already established in the city from 1863 to 1868 by northern philanthropy, local charity, and the Freedman's Bureau. These schools embraced seven locations, twenty teachers, and an enrollment of 1,864, with an average daily attendance of 1,300.[2] The outstanding educational leader, teacher and administrator of these colored

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[1] Acts of the Legislature, Mar. 5, 1867.

[2] Memphis Daily Post, Apr. 22, 1868.

schools for four years had been J. H. Barnum, superintendent of these newly acquired colored schools.[1] During the school year 1868-69, his title was superintendent of colored schools, but the following year he was referred to as assistant superintendent in charge of colored schools. The first record found of this title is in July, 1869.[2]

Differences soon arose between Superintendent Leath and Assistant Superintendent Barnum. For three months in 1870, the question of abolishing the office of assistant superintendent was before the board.[3] Apparently an irreconcilable difference arose between Superintendent Leath, a native son of intense pre-war convictions and Mr. Barnum, a northerner, who came to Memphis to administer philanthropic contributions to the Negro race and later became the chief agent of the Freedman's Bureau in West Tennessee. Consequently, upon the recommendation of the superintendent the office of assistant was abolished in 1870. The duties of the office were continued for some years under the title of principal of colored schools.[4]

Whether to have white or colored teachers for the Negro schools remained a problem for several years. In 1875, however, the board adopted a resolution "that when future selections of principals and teachers for colored schools are to be named colored persons be employed provided that such persons shall have all requisite qualifications."[5] Shortly thereafter B. K. Sampson, a colored teacher from Vicksburg, Mississippi, with fourteen years' experience, succeeded J. H. Barnum as principal of all colored schools.[6] The office of assistant superintendent does not appear again until 1876.

After the schools had endured the financial depression following the yellow fever epidemic of 1873, the nation wide financial crisis of the same period and the local attack from citizens and press, James T. Leath was recalled to the superintendency.[7] Superintendent Leath simultaneously held two public of-

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[1] Memphis Evening Post, July 14, 1868.

[2] Ibid., July 14, 1869. [3] Ibid., July 20, 1869.

[4] Memphis Daily Avalanche, Mar. 1, 1870.

[5] Ibid., Apr. 13, 1875. [6] Ibid., July 13, 1875.

[7] Ibid., July 4, 1876.

fices, that of superintendent of public instruction and that of member of the board of police and fire commissioners.[1] In accepting the office a second time Mr. Leath, among other recommendations, requested: "In view of the arduous and diversified labors which devolve upon the superintendent, I beg permission of the board to employ an assistant superintendent at my own expense, and I designate W. H. Foute as my assistant, and ask your honorable body to recognize him as such."[2] Mr. Foute at the time was principal of Market Street School. The board concurred in the appointment of Mr. Foute as assistant superintendent provided he "shall not be recognized as an officer of the board of education."[3] During the two years of this arrangement, Foute continued to appear in the list of teachers as principal of Market Street School. Apparently he performed only office duties of a routine character for the superintendent in out-of-school hours. Upon the death of Superintendent Leath in 1878, Foute succeeded to the superintendency[4] and for twenty-four years thereafter the office o assistant superintendent was dispensed with.

In 1902, however, it was decided "that the duties of superintendent were too much for one man" and the office of assistant superintendent was accordingly recreated,[5] and W. S. Jones, an educator of prominence in the private schools of Memphis, was elected to the office.[6] He served in this office continuously for twelve years and in addition was acting superintendent during one of these years.

The duties of the assistant superintendent were enumerated in 1914,[7] as follows:

1. To assist the superintendent in such of his duties as he may request.
2. In the absence of special instructions from the superintendent, to visit generally the several schools, observe th work of teachers, pupils, and the general condition and

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[1] Ibid., Aug. 15, 1876. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., Sept. 5, 1876.

[4] Memphis Public Ledger, Nov. 27, 1878.

[5] The Commercial Appeal, July 15, 1902.

[6] Ibid., July 29, 1902.

[7] Rules and Regulations of the Public Schools of Memphis, Tenn., 1913-14, pp. 19-20.

discipline of the schools and make suggestions to the principals for more efficient performance.

3. To make a monthly report in writing to the superintendent of his work, and make suggestions for improvements.
4. To attend all teacher meetings called by the superintendent, and all committee meetings when requested.
5. To make written reports on the qualifications of teachers to the superintendent, and to the board when requested.
6. To act as superintendent in the absence of the superintendent.
7. To act as statistician for the superintendent and the board.
8. To prepare official announcements for the press after same have been approved by the superintendent or the president of the board.
9. To keep the report cards on teachers properly checked up and in perfect order.
10. To give information regarding district lines, have charge of transfer pupils and pay pupils, and to receive cases of discipline appealed by the principals.
11. To prepare examinations for teacher examinations and the semi-annual examination of pupils.
12. To present himself to the superintendent each week day at 8:45 a.m., and after school hours, to observe office hours until 5:00 p.m.

More than any other official recorded in Table 27, W. S. Jones discharged a broader variety of duties than any of his predecessors or successors. The records disclose that, as assistant superintendent from 1901 to 1914, he not only discharged the foregoing duties assigned him, but many others. He seems to have attended all board meetings, made a report over his own name in addition to that of the superintendent in the annual report, and was often an emissary of the board before civic organizations, the city council, and the state legislature to further the fight to increase the tax rate for the schools. Having served fourteen consecutive years as assistant to five different superintendents, he attained an acquaintanceship with school problems and needs not possessed by any of his superiors, and the board relied heavily upon his advice and council.

From 1914 to 1921 the office was abolished again, but in

TABLE 27

SUCCESSION OF ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS, MEMPHIS CITY SCHOOLS

Name	Title	Term of Office
J. H. Barnum	Assistant superintendent in charge of colored schools	1867 to 1870
J. H. Barnum	Principal of colored schools	1870 to 1875
B. K. Sampson	Principal of colored schools	1875 go 1876
W. H. Foute	Assistant superintendent	1876 to 1878
W. S. Jones	Assistant superintendent	1901 to 1914
A. P. Finley	Assistant superintendent	1921 to 1927
K. W. Warden	Director of research and attendance	1927 to 1936
D. M. Hilliard	Director of instruction	1936 to 1940
J. M. Smith	Director of instruction	1940 to 1944

1921 the superintendent stated "that the system had grown so large that it is impossible for the superintendent to handle it without the aid of an assistant." Accordingly the office was restored, and Dr. A. P. Finley was appointed.[1]

With the advent of K. W. Warden, the title of the office was changed to Director of Attendance and Research, and in 1936 it was changed again to Director of Instruction. From 1902 to 1914 the office was assistant superintendent in reality as well as in name. After 1921, however, the office became somewhat detached from all executive functions and became a central bureau for the administration of pupil attendance, classification and promotion of pupils, and,in addition,for the supervision of psychological and educational achievement tests. Since 1936 the director of instruction has not had his duties definitely established. Classification, promotion and testing of pupils has been, in recent years, left largely to the principal of each school. Attendance and records have been left to the director of attendance. The director of instruction has at different times performed several functions: director of curriculum revision, high school supervisor, director in charge of elementary supervisors,

[1]The Commercial Appeal, July 26, 1921.

supervisor of standardized tests, and supervisor of libraries.

The Principal

Following Appomattox a revival in interest and enthusiasm for public education took place in Memphis, and endured until social progress was arrested by the ill effects of the yellow fever epidemic and the financial depression of 1873. This eight-year period witnessed the purchase of several lots, the first abandonment of rented quarters by the erection of both frame and brick buildings, the importation of many competent teachers from the East, North, and West,[1] the extension of the system to include Negro pupils, the enactment of a new school charter, the inauguration of a graded school system,[2] and the introduction of the office of principal as an administrative officer.

There were three cardinal factors which demanded the creation of the office of principal. First, was the classification of pupils into grades, each grade corresponding to a year's work. Previous to 1866, the schools of Memphis occupied rented quarters. The typical school of that era was a rented building housing one teacher with 50 pupils, or two teachers with 100 pupils, and occasionally three teachers with 150 pupils. Typically they were ungraded, one teacher, and sex segregated schools.

In 1866 experimentation was begun in a small way with a graded school under the supervision of a principal. In the annual report of 1865-66 the superintendent writes:

> The schools have so far as possible been classified. It is hoped--the plan of uniform gradation may be complete. Owing to our poor accommodations and the scattered state of our houses each teacher is placed in charge of some fifty or sixty pupils and ordered to teach them without any course furnished as a guide. If in addition to what has already been done, groups of classified schools should be placed under the supervision of a principal, I feel confident greater success would follow. I would particularly recommend, ... that the experiment be tried in the engine house at the corner of Adams and Second Street. If the second story can be fitted and furnished like the third it can be made to accommodate 300 primary scholars. I would place in charge of this one of our most experienced teachers with five assistants.[3]

After this date the classification of pupils into a system of

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[1] Memphis Daily Post, Mar. 25, 1867.

[2] Fourteenth Annual Report, 1865-66, op. cit., p. 37.

[3] Twentieth Annual Report, 1870-71, p. 16.

grades, with a group of grades housed together and all under the management of a building principal, proceeded as rapidly as the construction or acquisition of buildings adapted to this arrangement could be obtained.

The second factor demanding the office of principal was the erection of large and commodious school buildings. By 1873 the school board had erected five buildings, two frame and three brick. Four of them contained eight classrooms, one for each grade, and one contained twelve. Each of these buildings when first opened did so under the management of a building principal, who immediately classified the school into grades. From that day to the present, this practice has continued.

The third factor rendering the office of principal necessary was the need to relieve the superintendent of burdensome administrative duties. Since the inception of public schools in 1848, pupils could be admitted to the schools only by a ticket of admission, signed by the superintendent, assigning the pupil to a specific school location, grade, and teacher. This administrative duty was assumed by the principal. The superintendent declared:

> This custom gives great trouble and inconvenience to families and imposes a heavy and unnecessary burden on the superintendent. I have been surrounded on the last of August and the first of September by hundreds of men, women, and children amounting almost to mobs. . . . . On the opening day of school, let every pupil go to the school he last attended and there procure a ticket of admission from the principal.[1]

Supervisory visits to the classroom teacher was the duty of the superintendent imposed by the rules of the board. Superintendent Leath in 1871 reported:

> . . . . the duty of visiting has been increased 100 per cent in the last three years. . . . . It now requires 10 days of hard trudging to get around through the schools. It is to be expected that our schools will continue to increase in numbers and that the labors of your superintendent will consequently grow heavier. . . . . The superintendent's usefulness is impaired or lessened by so much drudgery in visitation. For the advancement of the interests and welfare of the schools, I hope the board will give the superintendent a sufficient number of principals to give daily attention to each school and . . . . the superintendent . . . . in the office of the board . . . . should receive the reports of the principals.[2]

This same year the superintendent reported 1,380 visitations to classroom teachers.[3]

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid., p. 15. [3] Ibid., p. 24.

Formerly, teachers individually had reported directly to the superintendent the names, addresses, attendance, and progress of each pupil assigned his or her room. All such records of pupil accounting is now summarized by the principal before it passes into the hands of the superintendent. Formerly, the superintendent had supervised the preparation of all examinations for the promotion of pupils from grade to grade or from one level of schools to another level. These duties were delegated to the various principals. Formerly, all parents interviewed the superintendent concerning the progress, maladjustment and disciplinary problems of their children. The principal now became the source to which parents must resort for information relative to their children's progress and failure. The superintendent's office was reserved as a court of appeal. In short, the principal became the agent of the board and of the superintendent for the successful operation for that segment of the school system assigned him under the rules and regulations of the board. On the front line of public contact, he soon became and has always remained the most important line officer to interpret the schools to the public.

These early principalships were both full-time principal positions and part-time teaching positions. The position was full time without teaching duties in the larger schools such as Linden Avenue and Alabama Street schools, but was a part teaching position in the smaller schools and in the boys' high school and the girls' high school.

When in 1875, the school system was threatened within by a lack of financial support and attacked without for many of its useless and expensive practices, the principalship was one thing pointed to as extravagance. In appealing to the board to reduce teacher salaries, the Citizens' Protective Union recommended the abolishment of the office of principal.[1] The position was attacked by the public press as a "sinecure" and "as useless as a fifth wheel to a wagon."[2] The retrenchment adopted by the board at this time made all principals head teachers except two, and these two became district principals having supervision over schools at more than one location.[3]

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[1] School Board Minutes, Apr. 13, 1875.

[2] Memphis Public Ledger, July 8, 1875.

[3] Ibid., June 23, 1875.

Thereafter for ten years it appears that principals were part-time teachers or head teachers. In 1885, however, the board empowered the superintendent to appoint "walking" or "independent" principals.[1] From that time forth, the office except in a few small schools has been a full-time executive position without teaching duties.

By reference to the published rules and regulations at various periods in the history of the schools, the powers and duties of the office of principal may be observed. In 1876 these duties were defined as follows:

1. To classify pupils in the various grades and to keep them distributed so far as possible, equally in the various departments.
2. To keep a register of teachers, showing their presence, absence, tardiness and time of arrival.
3. To send to the superintendent and parents once each month the record of each pupil.
4. To notify parents of the absence and tardiness of their children.
5. To examine pupils in all departments and subjects at least once each month.
6. To coöperate with the superintendent in advising teachers of good methods of instruction.
7. To collect and properly account for the tuition fees of pay pupils.
8. To recommend the suspension and expulsion of pupils.
9. To exercise oversight and direction of the janitor.
10. To prescribe rules for good order and to assist and advise with teachers in handling discipline.
11. To keep a general register of the name, age, attendance, grades, suspension and departure of all pupils.
12. To be the organ of communication between the central office and the teachers.
13. To make an annual written report of the operations, conditions, and progress of his school.[2]

During the following decade these duties were added to

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[1] School Board Minutes, Nov. 10, 1885.

[2] Annual Report, 1875-76, op. cit., pp. 41-43.

those just recited:

1. To see that all property is kept in good order and to have charge of all furniture and grounds.
2. To suffer a monetary deduction whenever a monthly or annual report is tardy in its compilation and deliverance.
3. To have charge of the ringing of all bells.
4. To acknowledge the receipt of all announcements from the superintendent.
5. To conserve coal and to inspect its quality and quantity.
6. To administer the rules of the board regarding adopted textbooks purchased by the pupil and those furnished free by the board.
7. And, and at the end of the session to file with the superintendent all records and reports.[1]

By 1914 these further duties had been added:

1. To read once each month to the pupils the rules in reference to their duties and requirements.
2. To be at their post of duty 25 minutes before the time of opening school.
3. Not to send pupils as messengers beyond the limits of the school yards.
4. Not to excuse teachers for tardiness or absence.
5. To act as ex-officio librarian.
6. To hold periodic faculty meetings at least once each month in order to improve deportment and scholarship, to discuss new and better systems of instruction, and to foster a closer and more sympathetic relationship between principal and teacher.
7. To attend all similar meetings of principals called by the superintendent, under pain of pecuniary penalty for absence.
8. To make periodic reports to the superintendent on the conditions of the building, grounds, furniture and on the efficiency or inefficiency of janitors and teachers.[2]

Many additional duties have been inherited by the principal since the board has abandoned the practice of publishing a

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[1] Annual Report, 1882-83, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

[2] Rules and Regulations of the Public Schools of Memphis, Tenn., 1913-14, pp. 29-33.

booklet of rules and regulations. Among them may be added:

1. The administration of all extra-curriculum activities.
2. The compilation of reports to the state department of education.
3. The management of a free textbook system in the elementary schools and a rental system in the high schools.
4. The collection, disbursement, and accounting of large sums of money.
5. And the supervision of the school cafeteria.

Thus through evolutionary steps, the principal is responsible for the general management of the entire establishment in all its departments and activities. Where the principal is less than this in importance, it is due to his own indifference or incapacity and not to the powers and duties bestowed by the board and superintendent.

Supervisors

In Memphis, three prime forces seem to have operated to call into existence the office of supervisor. The first of these was the introduction into the curriculum of subject matter different from the three R's in the elementary field or departing from the traditionally academic in the secondary field. Such new courses being unfamiliar to the teaching personnel demanded experts to train the teachers to teach the new subjects and frequently to teach the pupils. The second was the growth of the system. From the beginning, the superintendent has been charged with the full responsibility for the supervision of instruction. After 1900, the magnitude of this responsibility called into existence supervisors to assist in the discharge of this administrative duty. The third factor was the gradual development of the new science of educational methods. With the development of psychological and educational achievement tests, with ability groupings, with remedial methods in teaching reading and arithmetic, with curriculum revision, and ad infinitum, the services of people with specialized training have been necessary to assist in the direction of this new science.

Music was the first of the special subjects which demanded specialized training. As early as 1856 the president of the board in his annual report stated,

> It has been the custom of the Board of Visitors from the beginning to encourage the study of vocal music. For a por-

> tion of the time since their organization, a superintendent has been employed who was capable of giving instruction in this branch of study, and who spent a portion of his time in the instruction of pupils in those schools, whose teachers were not qualified to do it. . . . . To have this important branch of education properly conducted, it will be necessary to employ a special teacher for the purpose, and the salary of such teacher is included in the estimate of school expenses for next year.[1]

For ten years thereafter, the records disclose no employment of a special teacher. The superintendent in 1866 reminded the board that their "rules prescribe that it [vocal music] shall be taught in every department, but no provision has ever been made to carry the regulation into effect."[2] The following year "an instructor was employed to give lessons to the teachers in such a manner as to enable them to instruct their classes."[3] This teacher soon became a full time employee of the board instructing at periodic intervals all pupils and teachers.[4] This arrangement evidently continued until the retrenchment program, following the epidemic of 1873, wrought a cessation in this and many other dispensable services. The exact date of the reinstatement of music supervision is uncertain but the action came before the board for consideration in 1886.[5] However, a supervisor of music is not found in the records until 1899.[6] Since this latter date, the office of supervisor of music has been continuous. An assistant to the supervisor was employed in 1904,[7] but the services of this assistant were dispensed with during the depression retrenchment in 1932.

Drawing was another special subject which was embraced in the curriculum at an early date and called for specialized training. "Mechanical or object drawing" whose intention was to make

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[1] Fourth Annual Report, 1855-56, op. cit., p. 19.

[2] Fourteenth Annual Report, 1865-66, op. cit., p. 49.

[3] Fifteenth Annual Report, 1866-67, op. cit., p. 49.

[4] School Board Minutes, Sept. 9, 1867.

[5] Ibid., Oct. 11, 1886.

[6] Report of the Board of Education of the City of Memphis, 1899-1900, pp. 12-13.

[7] Reports of the Board of Education of the City of Memphis, 1903-04, 1904-05, pp. 43-44.

"artisans, not artists," was introduced in 1869, and immediately efforts were exerted to secure the employment by the board of a specially trained teacher.[1] Certain difficulties prevented the employment of this specially trained drawing teacher before 1873, and after that date it was impossible for three decades to afford anything except the skeleton outline of a traditional curriculum. Nevertheless, the superintendent in 1878,[2] in 1895,[3] and again in 1900[4] urged upon the board a program of industrial education including mechanical drawing. Between 1904 and 1908, a definite program of manual arts, embracing mechanical drawing, was inaugurated and embodied in the printed course of study, and was under the supervision of a special supervisor.[5]

Physical culture was a third special subject demanding a specially trained teacher or supervisor. Gymnastics was included in the regular program in 1865,[6] and in 1867, a Captain Kock was in the employ of the board as a special teacher of gymnastics.[7] Like so many other needed services, special instruction in this field was dispensed with after the tragic days of 1873. Rote exercises were evidently continued in those schools whose principals sponsored it, for Superintendent Collier in 1881 wrote of the value of calisthenics during his principalship of Leath School during the seventies.[8] After the second disastrous yellow fever epidemic of 1878, public attention became centered upon health measures. The board of public health carried out a periodic physical examination of school children, and physical exercises were again adopted by the board as a regular part of the curriculum.[9]

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[1] Annual Report, 1869-70, op. cit., p. 16.

[2] Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Board of Education of the City of Memphis, 1876-77, 1877-78, pp. 18-20.

[3] Annual Report, 1893-94-95, op. cit., p. 69.

[4] Annual Report, 1899-1900, op. cit., p. 6.

[5] Reports of the Public Schools of the City of Memphis, Tennessee, 1908-09, pp. 78-79.

[6] Annual Report, 1865-66, op. cit., pp. 50-54.

[7] School Board Minutes, Feb. 13, 1867.

[8] Annual Report, 1881-82, op. cit., p. 17.

[9] Ibid., p. 14.

The German-American system of calisthenics was adopted and administered by certain teachers in each building who had been somewhat trained for this responsibility. As soon as the school revenue permitted, a supervisor of physical education was employed.[1] The one and only person to hold this office was G. H. Pfaff, from 1904 to 1932. This special service was abolished in the retrenchment program of 1932. Since Pearl Harbor, the State Department of Education is pressuring local units to emphasize physical education, and again the Memphis schools are making an effort in this direction with but little leadership from centralized supervision.

Penmanship was one of the traditional subjects concerning which teachers needed supervisory help to teach according to new methods. For twenty years following 1873, the superintendent was concerned about muscular movements, the slant system, the semi-vertical system, and the timing of the movements of the pen, in the teaching of writing. Eventually, in 1895, the board concurred in the repeated recommendation of the superintendent and employed a supervisor of penmanship.[2] In addition to sending out written instructions to teachers, this supervisor visited each schoolroom on schedule at intervals of each three weeks and conducted a demonstration lesson not exceeding twenty minutes in length.[3] The office of writing supervisor continued for thirty-eight years, and was abolished, like many other services, in the retrenchment of 1932.

The primary grades were rapidly evolving a new methodology which necessitated more expert direction. Accordingly, after several recommendations by the superintendent, the board in 1909 employed a supervisor of the primary grades. Since that time, the office has remained continuous except for four years from 1919 to 1923.

Intermediate supervision was for reasons not recorded surprisingly delayed in its introduction. An arrangement was entered into with the West Tennessee State Teachers College, located in Memphis, to help in the training of intermediate teachers.

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[1] Reports of the Board of Education of the City of Memphis, 1903-04, 1904-05, p. 25.

[2] Annual Report, 1893-94-95, op. cit., p. 69.

[3] Annual Report, 1908-09, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

Classes for these teachers were organized under the direction of the president of the college and his staff, and were "designed to give the teachers, between the fourth and eighth grades inclusive, comprehensive reviews of the subjects which they were required to teach, and at the same time to increase their efficiency in school room work."[1] However, in 1928 after Assistant Superintendent Finley had advocated several years previously the employment of an intermediate supervisor, the board tardily concurred in the recommendation, and such a supervisor was employed in 1928, and the office has been continuous from that year to the present.

Commercial education became an important part of the vocational offerings of the high school between 1900 and 1910. The subject of bookkeeping appeared in the curriculum of the senior department as early as 1856.[2] It disappeared from the program about 1870 for an indefinite period, but in 1894, the records disclosed that both bookkeeping and stenography were being taught.[3] When the high school offerings were experiencing an expansion, shortly after 1900, necessitating a broadening of the elective system and the formulation of differentiated curricula, a commercial course was adopted in the high school and a supervisor of commercial education appeared for the first time in 1907.[4] The office was continued until 1937, at which time it was abolished in the program of financial adjustment following 1932.

Industrial education was early considered by the board as a desirable and legitimate function of secondary education, but on account of the vicissitudes suffered by Memphis, it was long delayed and inadequately developed. As early as 1869, the board resolved that the high school should "look more to the development of those branches of science and study which fit a scholar more for a thorough business man and mechanic than for a literary man. . . . ."[5] This intention was reasserted several times dur-

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[1] Annual Report of the Board of Education, Memphis City Schools, 1914-15, p. 47.

[2] Fifth Annual Report, 1856-57, op. cit., p. 21.

[3] Annual Report, 1893-94-95, op. cit., p. 52.

[4] Annual Report, 1907-08, op. cit., p. 26.

[5] School Board Minutes, Aug. 9, 1869.

ing the succeeding thirty-five years but apparently nothing was accomplished except a textbook course in bookkeeping and stenography. After the turn of the century, however, the high school problem became so urgent that the board was compelled to find the revenue to support such a program. By 1907, a concise course of study had been developed and printed, embracing manual training, domestic science, and art.[1] A supervisor, E. E. Utterback, evidently of broad training and thorough knowledge, was employed in 1906 to supervise these three branches of vocational education.[2] From that date to 1914,[3] under his supervision, these three branches of study were established on a permanent and enduring basis. In the course of time, industrial arts, pure art, and domestic science separated company and went their own way under separate supervision. From 1914 to 1921, industrial arts had no special supervision. At the latter date, supervision was reëstablished and has existed to the present time.

Art was introduced in 1905. At first it was "handled by principals and teachers with trepidation,"[4] but by 1907 it had been placed under the supervision of Mr. Utterback together with his other supervisory duties. A graded course of art instruction from the first grade up was soon formulated and printed. Teachers gained skill and confidence to teach the subject. After 1914, the supervision of art was separated from that of other subjects. The office of art supervisor remained until 1932, at which time it was treated as a dispensable service.

Home economics, introduced into the curriculum in 1907, is now thirty-eight years old, and from 1914 to 1943 has managed to survive without the services of special supervision. Taking advantage of the national and state salary supplements to support such an officer, the system has employed this service during the past two years.

A psychologist was employed in 1916.[5] At first it was the duty of this officer to effect an improved adjustment of pupils committed to the care of the Juvenile Court. Later, however,

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[1] Annual Report, 1907-08, op. cit., pp. 62-77.

[2] The Commercial Appeal, Sept. 1, 1906.

[3] Ibid., June 13, 1914. [4] Ibid., May 22, 1906.

[5] Ibid., Jan. 11, 1916.

the service was extended under Assistant Superintendents Finley and Warden to the entire school system. In addition to individual case studies, this officer administered all educational and mental tests throughout the entire system. At the present time, this officer is titled, supervisor of child adjustment.

TABLE 28

SUPERVISORS EMPLOYED BY MEMPHIS CITY SCHOOLS BY DESIGNATED PERIODS

	Before 1873	1873 to 1890	1890 to 1930	1930 to 1944
Subject	The Period of Education Revival Following the Civil War	The Period of Depopulation and Despondency Following Two Epidemics	The Period of the Modern Memphis	The Period Following the National Depression
Music.....	supervision	.....	supervision	supervision
Drawing.....	.....	.....	supervision	supervision
Phy. Educ...	supervision	.....	supervision	.....
Writing.....	.....	.....	supervision	.....
Primary.....	.....	.....	supervision	supervision
Intermediate	.....	.....	supervision	supervision
Commerce....	.....	.....	supervision	.....
Industrial..	.....	.....	supervision	supervision
Art.....	.....	.....	supervision	.....
Home Econ...	.....	.....	.....	supervision
Psychologist	.....	.....	supervision	supervision

Some idea of the duties of supervisors in the early years may be ascertained from the printed rules and regulations of 1914.[1] Supervisors were required:

1. To make out an itinerary for one month's duration.
2. To register with the principal upon entering and leaving his school.
3. To inspect all teacher situations to see that the work as laid out by the department is faithfully done, and to report all failures in this respect to the principal
4. To conduct model lessons where deemed advisable or upon

[1] Rules and Regulations, 1913-14, op. cit., p. 21.

the request of the principal.

5. To remain in the school during school hours and to spend school hours in the central office only with the superintendent's consent.
6. To conduct called meetings of teachers for instruction and improvement with the approval of the superintendent.
7. To attend all general teacher meetings.
8. To call on any teacher for a model lesson.
9. Not to change the course of study, which prerogative belongs to the superintendent.

By reference to Table 28, the conclusion is sustained that supervision in Memphis, while desirable, is not deemed necessary. In periods of progressive changes and prosperity, supervision was used by the superintendent for the improvement of instruction, but during depressions, it was among the first services eliminated.

The interplay of social forces has influenced to a considerable degree the development of the powers of school functionaries who at different times have exercised controlling power over the schools. In the early period before the war aldermen found themselves more adept in dealing with the economic development of city life--in contracting for wharf construction, for the graveling of city streets, in promoting railroad and plank road development. The new public business of managing schools was strange to their mental habits, since they were business or professional men. The aldermen agreed early to elect a superintendent and to incorporate a board of laymen, and to turn over to them the affairs of the schools. The forces of reform after the war increased the number of board members and accordingly the number of board committees. Similarly, these reform forces were responsible for the creation of the office of assistant superintendent, the office of principal, and the office of supervisor. By the same token, the demands of retrenchment after the epidemic of 1873 and 1878 caused these same offices to be abolished or curtailed. The tremendous expansion of the school system in the modern period demanded the re-creation of these offices, and the transfer to them of practically all school administration.

CHAPTER VI

PROVISIONS FOR THE PUBLIC EDUCATION OF NEGROES

Memphis possessed relatively few Negroes previous to the Civil War. During the progress of the war, however, droves of liberated slaves flocked to the city for food, shelter, clothing, and bodily protection afforded by the occupying army and the Freedmen's Bureau. Since the war period they have remained and have composed about 40 per cent of the population. To establish and maintain a system of schools for this large Negro population has been one of the most perplexing social problems encountered by the community. How a conservative southern community met and solved these problems is presented in this section of the study.

Early Memphis a Cosmopolitan City

Previous to the Civil War public opinion in Memphis had developed no extreme prejudices favoring either slavery or abolition. During the forties and fifties the future of Memphis was dependent upon a three-cornered trade. It was a depot through which northern products, moving down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, found their final markets in the South and Southwest. By reverse shipments it was a clearing house for the raw products of these two regions moving to the North and Northeast. Preëminently, it was an exchange center for cotton moving from southern plantations down the Mississippi into the Atlantic markets both of America and Europe. This three-cornered trade made Memphis a "Northern and Western town before it was Southern."

The ratio of Negroes to whites was far less in Memphis than in the adjacent territory of its location. The percentage of Negroes in Memphis in 1860 was 17; that of Shelby County, 52; that of West Tennessee, 37; that of Arkansas, 25; and that of Mississippi, 55. Slave labor in Memphis was economically disadvantageous. With throngs of Irish willing to work for a pittance it was unprofitable to employ unskilled slaves which sold for

$750, slave smiths for $1,114, and slave carpenters for $2,500.[1] In the city, slaves were engaged chiefly in household duties or were hired out for $150 to $200 annually.

Until changed by successive epidemics Memphis was a cosmopolitan city. In 1860 only one-half of its population was native born. The Irish composed 19 per cent and the Germans 6 per cent of the population. The other foreign born were chiefly English, British-Americans, French, and Scots. In successive elections from 1848 to 1860, Memphis divided its votes almost equally between Whig and democratic candidates and in 1860 Breckenridge, the southern democratic candidate, secured only 10 per cent of the entire votes cast. The remaining 90 per cent was equally distributed between Bell and Douglass.[2]

Although Memphis had no deep prejudices on the slavery question and had every reason to consider itself a cosmopolitan rather than a provincial community, nevertheless, the unsuppressable national issues of sectionalism which characterized the decade of the fifties, aroused local fears. The future of Memphis was inextricably joined with the development of the South, and the new Southwest, namely Texas and the territories of the Mexican Session. By 1856 Memphis had placed its three thousand Negroes under rigid surveillance. They were forbidden to be taught to read, to hold any night meetings except by permission of the mayor and under the supervision of the police, to hear a Negro preacher in the city, and they were required to retire to their homes at night by public curfew.[3]

The disintegration of the Whig party, the defeat of Douglass and Bell, the inauguration of Lincoln, the fall of Fort Sumter, secession in Tennessee, led by the west portion of the state, and mob hysteria broke the national moorings to which Memphis had been bound since its beginning in 1826. Instead, its fate was naturally joined to that section of which it was an inescapable center, the South and the Southwest, and its attendant sectional issues.

The Missionary Schools

The first schools for Negroes in Memphis had their begin-

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[1] Capers, op. cit., p. 79. [2] Ibid., p. 114.

[3] Ibid., p. 110.

nings during the Civil War. The moving spirit and leader in this movement was a United States Army officer, Colonel John Eaton, Jr. Colonel Eaton was a graduate of Dartmouth College and had been superintendent of schools in Toledo, Ohio. He joined the union army as an army chaplain and was attached to Grant's command where he soon attracted Grant's attention.[1] "He was soon ordered by General Grant to look after the organization and care of colored labor in the Mississippi Valley from Cairo to Natchez. . . . ."[2] Upon the organization of the Freedmen's Bureau he became its agent for West Tennessee. After the fall of Memphis in 1862, and its subsequent occupation by federal troops, Eaton established headquarters here. Here also flocked thousands of Negroes to be protected, clothed, and fed by the federal Army. For the children of these unfortunates, few of whom could read or write, Eaton exerted his energies to establish schools. Eaton's task in this endeavor was rendered less difficult through the benevolent societies of the North and East, each generally supported by some church organization, whose mission it was to evangelize and educate the recently freed slaves in the South. These societies sent not only considerable sums of money but often able and well-trained preachers and teachers to southern cities to execute their purposes. Memphis received her share of these benevolences and missionaries. Eaton organized all these separate agencies under one agent and the schools which they founded, supported, and taught, under one superintendent.

These colored schools were organized much after the fashion of the white schools then existing. "The first free colored school taught in this city was opened in the early part of 1863, in a barrack building in South Memphis by Miss Fannie Kiddo, from Illinois, a young lady of culture and high Christian character, sent here by the United Presbyterian Freedmen's Aid Society."[3] One year later, twenty teachers were teaching Negro children at nine different locations, and had enrolled 809 pupils.[4] These

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[1] "John Eaton Jr.," Encyclopedia Americana, IX (1943), 517.

[2] Post, op. cit., Apr. 25, 1867.

[3] Ibid., July 24, 1869.

[4] Memphis Daily Bulletin, Jan. 7, 1865.

schools at first occupied property either rented or seized. In 1864, they were put under the superintendency of "Rev. L. H. Cobb, who was educated at Dartmouth College, and who has had considerable experience as a teacher in some of the best New England schools."[1] The white and colored schools differed, however, in their method of support. Whereas the white schools were supported by taxation, the colored schools were sustained chiefly by the philanthropy of the benevolent associations of the North, augmented by local donations and small tuition charges for those who could or would pay.

For a time these schools flourished. The number of teachers did not increase appreciably but the number of pupils did. From 18 teachers and 809 pupils enrolled in 1864, the numbers increased to 19 teachers and 1,140 pupils in 1867,[2] and 19 teachers and 2,544 pupils in 1868.[3] "Large and enthusiastic" mass meetings of colored people, led, of course, by well-meaning missionaries and by self-seeking carpetbag politicians, became common.[4] By 1867, these meetings had perfected an organization styled the Education Association of Memphis. Its purpose was to sustain free schools in the city which made no discrimination against pupils on account of color, to raise funds to maintain such schools, to secure as large attendance as possible upon these schools, and to foster regular meetings of the superintendent and teachers of these schools for the purpose of "professional and social intercourse."[5]

Because of continued "disloyalty," the duly elected government after being tolerated for two years by the occupying military authorities was dissolved in favor of a military government in 1864, which endured until the cessation of hostilities. In September, 1864, Major General C. C. Washburn issued the following order, No. 164:

> The control and discipline of the educational interests, schools, and teachers of the colored people of the city of Memphis are hereby entrusted to the municipal government of the city, and the committee on public schools is hereby constituted a school board with full powers for the efficient

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[1] Ibid., Oct. 29, 1864.
[2] Post, op. cit., Apr. 22, 1868.
[3] Ibid., July 24, 1869.
[4] Ibid., Feb. 4, 1867.
[5] Ibid., Feb. 20, 1867.

arrangement of the same.[1]

The only apparent result of this order was to give to John Eaton and his associates a free hand in propagandizing the community through his paper, The Post, and through the aforementioned Education Association of Memphis in favor of his ultimate object--a free school system of mixed races through public taxation.

The Memphis board of education never accepted the responsibility of Negro education until compelled to do so by state statute. From 1863 to 1867 the board took no cognizance of the Negro schools operating in the city. Only one record is found where it was accorded attention in board meetings. In February, 1867, Mr. Waldran, a board member, moved "That the president of the board appoint a committee of three to draft an amendment to the school law [school charter], providing for the insertion of the words 'and black youth' wherever the words 'white youth' occur." Even this motion was lost for the want of a second.[2]

The reconstruction state government under the leadership of Governor Brownlow[3] launched a broad and comprehensive state school program, which time soon proved was incapable of fulfillment by a state bankrupted by four years of war and plundered by three years of military occupation, in spite of the fact that John Eaton of Memphis was state superintendent of public instruction and exerted his best energies and talents to make it succeed. This state school law required each civil district board of education to establish within its jurisdiction "one or more special schools for colored children . . . . and all such schools so established . . . . shall be under the control and management of the board of education. . . . ."[4] Thus by legislative enactment a system of Negro schools in Memphis, now five years old, founded by northern missionaries, taught chiefly by northern white teachers, and supported by northern benevolences, passed peacefully from beyond the fostering care of those who had nurtured this social regeneration into the hands of those who had fought on many bloody battlefields to prevent it.

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[1] Minutes of the City Council, Sept. 5, 1864.

[2] Post, op. cit., Feb. 14, 1867. [3] Supra, p. 75.

[4] Acts of Tennessee, Mar. 5, 1867, sec. 17.

At first the board accepted this new responsibility with trepidation. In July, 1867, the board appointed a committee "to examine the state school law and to report to this board their duty regarding the opening and support of colored schools."[1] In December of this same year, this committee made a report as follows which was adopted by the board:

> Resolved that J. H. Barnum [Barnum, a northern missionary, had succeeded L. H. Cobb as superintendent of colored schools] be empowered to open and superintend as many free schools for colored children in this city as will supply the wants of such children allowing an average attendance of fifty pupils to each teacher.
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> Resolved that . . . . the whole expenses which this Board will incur shall not exceed such portion of the public state school money for the year 1867 as the number of colored children enumerated bears to the whole number of children enumerated as the scholastic population of the city and upon which said public money is drawn.[2]

The purpose and intent of this act was to permit the colored schools to continue as formerly but to turn over to their superintendent whatever funds the new state law provided for Negro education, and to incur no liability until the state money had been paid into their treasury. The superintendent summed up the situation when he wrote:

> The means for doing so [financing Negro schools] has not yet been placed at your disposal, nor by your charter are you empowered to assess a city tax for the education of colored children. The means of carrying on the colored schools must come from the state tax unless the board of mayor and aldermen will take steps to raise the funds. . . . . The funds now raised are not sufficient to support the schools for white children.[3]

Supported by this fund of the board and that of philanthropic contributions the colored schools opened in January, 1868, and operated for a term of five months. In August, 1868, two-fifths of the revenue received from the state in support of schools was paid over to Barnum for Negro schools.[4] A similar arrangement of supporting Negro education was adopted by the board for a second year[5] and Negro schools were maintained another

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[1] School Board Minutes, July 1, 1867.

[2] Ibid., Dec. 2, 1867.

[3] Fifteenth Annual Report, 1866-67, op. cit., p. 62.

[4] Post, op. cit., Aug. 18, 1868.

[5] School Board Minutes, Sept. 14, 1868.

five months beginning in January, 1869.

Concerning the achievement of these missionary schools Superintendent Barnum wrote in 1869:

> Over four thousand pupils have been taught to read in the colored schools, and more than one-half this number have been taught to write and obtain some knowledge of numbers. There are now teaching country schools in this and other states, twenty, who have been pupils in these schools.[1]

Local Tax Supported Negro Education

Free schools for Negroes supported by local, as well as state taxation, have their legal basis in the new school board charter of 1869. The public press was significantly quiet regarding the methods by which this charter was put through the legislature. Deductive reasoning may provide the answer. Previous to 1867, the conservatives in Memphis had carried all elections over their radical opponents by a margin of better than two to one,[2] but Governor Brownlow and his radical legislature saw to it that the conservative strength in Memphis, and especially in West Tennessee, would not have the power or means to embarrass his program of reconstruction. In 1866, the Negroes were clothed with civil rights and, in 1867, given the right of suffrage. In addition, those who participated in the rebellion were disenfranchised and the metropolitan police act placed the control of elections, in Memphis, in the hands of Brownlow's henchmen. As a result, all state and national elections in 1867 and 1868, in Memphis, turned in favor of radical candidates, thanks to the Negroes who cast half of the votes. Thus the stage was set in the capital for the radicals to achieve their desires in the way of a new charter. This new charter[3] not only established a system of colored schools to parallel the white school system, both of which were to be supported from public taxation, but it placed both systems under the power and control of one and the same board of education and its officers. Further, this charter specified a special tax to support future bond issues to purchase lots and erect school buildings.[4]

Pursuant to the provisions of this charter, a local elec-

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[1] Post, op. cit., July 24, 1869.

[2] Capers, op. cit., p. 174. [3] Supra, p. 20.

[4] Acts of Tennessee, 1868-69, chap. 30, pp. 130-142.

tion of board members was held on March 6, 1869.[1] This election resulted in the election of fourteen conservatives and six radicals to the board of education.[2] One thing was not given due consideration by the radicals in Nashville and that was the power of the Ku Klux Klan. The Klan, although it has left no written records, seems to have been able to scare the Negroes away from the polls in strictly local elections, for the conservatives not only carried the election of the board of education in their favor in 1869, but also the mayoralty election of the previous year.[3]

This board, consisting of a two-thirds conservative strength, set about, in the summer of 1869, to organize the first schools for Negroes supported from local public revenue. At the close of the school year in June, 1869, there were twenty-three teachers employed in the colored schools under Superintendent Barnum. The nativity of these teachers reveals the missionary character of these early Negro schools. Seven of the twenty-three were from Ohio, five from Michigan, two from Illinois, one from each of the states of Vermont, New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, and the remaining five were from Memphis. The teaching experience of these teachers averaged 5.3 years.[4] Economy measures forced the employment of only nine teachers for the colored schools to start the new school year in September. Of the nine employed, seven were retained from the list of missionary teachers, five of whom lived in northern states.[5] Evidently the board entertained little prejudice toward these northern teachers.

In order to make the transfer of the control of these schools from the Freedmen's Bureau to the local board of education as peaceful as possible, the board retained not only those missionary teachers who chose to remain, but Superintendent Barnum as well. Barnum was attracted to Memphis from Ohio and immediately was made superintendent of the Negro schools by Eaton, a position which he had held for two years at the time the board

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[1] Avalanche, op. cit., Feb. 27, 1869.

[2] Ibid., Mar. 7, 1869. [3] Capers, op. cit., p. 174.

[4] Post, op. cit., July 24, 1869.

[5] Appeal, op. cit., Aug. 24, 1869.

assumed charge of Negro education. During this time he had taken an active part in the local Education Association of Memphis, and in county superintendents' conferences throughout the state.[1] Furthermore, he was the agent of the bureau in the education department for West Tennessee.[2] Barnum thus became an officer of the board with the title of assistant superintendent and his duties were to have charge of the colored schools. Even the Post, a paper which had championed the cause of Negro education, could exclaim, "The Board of Education today, notwithstanding a majority of them are democrats, is providing impartially for the education of all the children of the city."[3]

By 1870, the reconstruction government in the state had come to an end. The Post in Memphis had ceased publication, Brownlow had gone to the United States Senate, John Eaton had become Commissioner of Education in the Federal Bureau of Education, the Ku Klux Klan had suspended their nightly rides, native sons had returned to the control of state and local affairs, and most of the reformers in Memphis had departed or those remaining had settled down into profitable business no longer concerned with the apostles of regeneration.

Restored to power, what would native sons do to further the fortunes of Negro education in Memphis? For the opening of schools in September, 1869, the board employed only nine[4] of the twenty-three teachers of the previous June. Even though the number was increased to thirteen after a few months, the assistant superintendent was compelled to use several of the brighter pupils to carry the teaching load.[5]

Enrollments in colored schools diminished. Faced with the stern reality of earning their bread and raiment by the sweat of their brow rather than by the bounty of the federal government, large numbers of Negroes left Memphis for their former rural pursuits, and most of the older Negro children remaining in the city were compelled to exchange the schoolroom for the spade

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[1] Post, op. cit., Mar. 25, 1869.

[2] Ibid., Apr. 3, 1869. [3] Ibid., July 30, 1869.

[4] Post, op. cit., Aug. 23, 1869.

[5] Avalanche, op. cit., Feb. 15, 1870.

and the wash tub. Colored enrollment declined from 2,193 in 1869[1] to 1,295 in 1872.[2] Not until the nineties did the figure again reach that of 1869.

The school year for the Negro children was lengthened. Previous to their administration by the school board, the missionary schools operated only five months, from January through May. The board opened and closed these schools by a calendar identical with the white school, which gave them a school year of ten months. This arrangement has continued to the present time.

The board became suspicious of the religious exercises which persisted in the colored schools from the days of their missionary status. Although clothed in religious garments, it was believed by many that these exercises were for the purpose of indoctrination, inimical to that of white supremacy. When the superintendent ordered the teachers of the colored school to abolish the practice of religious exercises, two teachers resigned and a third, Mrs. J. H. Barnum, refused either to comply or to resign. Whereupon, the superintendent laid the affair before the board for action. The board sustained the superintendent and asked for the resignation of those teachers who would not conform.[3]

The superintendent and his assistant in charge of Negro schools soon developed differences. Suddenly, Superintendent Leath, in board meeting, recommended the discontinuance of the office of assistant superintendent. He regarded the office as unnecessary and the economies of the schools demanded this change.[4] After having been considered in numerous board meetings, finally in March, the office was abolished by a vote of 12 to 6,[5] but not until the following fact had been established: that the superintendent refused to give orders to his assistant either in person or by correspondence but transmitted them in a "contemptuous manner" through third parties.[6] Charges were preferred

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[1] Post, op. cit., July 24, 1869.

[2] Appeal, op. cit., May 15, 1872.

[3] Avalanche, op. cit., Mar. 15, 1870.

[4] Ibid., Jan. 12, 1870.

[5] Appeal, op. cit., Mar. 1, 1870.

[6] Avalanche, op. cit., Mar. 1, 1870.

against Superintendent Leath[1] but at the next board meeting they were withdrawn.[2] Evidently a more thorough procedure was decided upon, for one year later, Leath, while absent from the city, was succeeded by H. C. Slaughter,[3] a principal, and one who was more reconciled than Leath to the social changes wrought by the war.

It was under the administration of Superintendent Slaughter that the first brick school buildings were completed, and the Negroes were not neglected in this planning. The reform forces, which sponsored the charter of 1869 provided that $50,000 annually should be used to build schoolhouses. They planned to house the Negroes as well as the whites in adequate quarters. The board and superintendent of 1871 and 1872 kept faith with this plan. By 1873, three modern brick schoolhouses had been completed.[4] Two were for white and the third was for colored pupils.

The opening of Clay Street school was the occasion for celebration and rejoicing. On the morning of March 13, 1874, the pupils and faculty, who were to occupy this new building, together with the mayor, prominent city officials, members of the board of education, and leading citizens, assembled in the Colored Baptist Church on Beale Street, and there a program was rendered including an address by the chairman of the board of education, by the mayor of the city, and others. From thence, a procession, visioned by 2,000 who thronged the sidewalks, proceeded to the new school building where the pupils took their seats by rooms in the "finest school building for Negroes in the South or West," and all was inspected by dignitaries and common citizens.[5]

The faculty assigned to this new Negro school consisted of nine members, a principal and eight classroom teachers. The principal was J. H. Barnum, who, since being dismissed as assistant superintendent, had served a time as a member of the board of education. The eight teachers included four white and as many colored, Mrs. Barnum being one of the white teachers.[6]

The second building era came after Memphis was recuperating from the despond of the ravages of two epidemics of yellow

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., Mar. 15, 1870.

[3] Appeal, op. cit., July 16, 1871.

[4] Supra, p. 45.

[5] Ibid., Mar. 14, 1874.

[6] Ibid.

fever. Four brick buildings were erected in 1889 and 1890, and one of these was for Negro pupils. Thus, two of the first seven permanently constructed school buildings were for the Negroes, which was about the ratio of the colored to white enrollment.

Even though the committee of the board on the examination and certification of teachers had reported the poor scholastic preparation of colored candidates for teaching positions, and in spite of the fact that visiting committees had reported inefficiency on the part of many colored teachers, the Negro patrons themselves desired colored instead of white teachers in their schools. During the summer of 1873, the colored citizens held a mass meeting and petitioned the board that they be provided with suitable buildings, that colored teachers from "principal down" be employed, and that Superintendent Slaughter be reëemployed.[1]

Several things ensued affecting Negro education before this petition was granted by the board. The election and induction into office of a new school board in May, 1873, paved the way for the employment of a northern man as superintendent and the first vicious sectional animosities experienced by the schools. Unfortunately, the two candidates became identified with sectional appeals, H. C. Slaughter representing southern traditions and Aaron Pickett, from Ohio and Wisconsin, northern progress. A study of the many reports leaves the historian with little positive evidence with which to explain this division in the board. The personnel of the board was of high caliber, being composed of business and professional men, a few of whom had been born in northern states, but with perhaps one or two exceptions, none could be accused with certainty of forming a "carpetbag ring" or of acting purely from sectional prejudices--the Ledger and Avalanche notwithstanding. H. C. Slaughter held a master's degree from the College of William and Mary, and had taught several years, having been a teacher, principal, and superintendent in Memphis. Aaron Pickett had taught at several places in the North and Northwest for twenty years. The records do not relate his education, and the press accused him of being untutored, but one is compelled to believe him to have been a college trained man from the character of his writings and educational leadership. From the vantage point of the present, the unprejudiced student is compelled to

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[1] Ibid., July 5, 1873.

the conclusion that the board acted from the motive of acquiring the best man for the office irrespective of his antecedents or nativity.

The appointment, however, proved most unfortunate. Through teacher committees, general teacher meetings, building teacher meetings, and personal visitations, he inaugurated changes in method of teaching, and curriculum revision that probably have not been equalled before or since in Memphis. Forces beyond the control of the board or himself set in to bring about his ruin. The aftermath of yellow fever and financial depression caused a drastic retrenchment. Almost every public force except the Appeal criticized the schools and particularly this "northern carpetbagger" and his supporters in the board. Several respected teachers of long service joined his critics and were rewarded by being dismissed. Some of his defenders were also rewarded including Barnum, who was made principal of Clay Street School, and Mrs. Barnum was again given a teaching position in the same school.

The aftermath of Pickett's administration affected permanently the colored schools. Barnum soon developed differences with his teachers and eventually the Negro citizens organized to remove him and to have their school administered by a colored principal and taught exclusively by colored teachers. Accordingly B. K. Sampson, colored, and a graduate of Oberlin College, succeeded Barnum.[1] A second sequence was the return of Leath to the superintendency. Leath was a strict provincial, a political office holder, willing to dwarf the schools at the expense of closing the high school. From his reëlection, henceforth, only colored teachers have been employed to instruct colored pupils. The missionary teachers began to leave when the board took over the colored schools, and after 1873 only Barnum and his wife remained. With Pickett's departure in 1876 went that of the Barnums, and the last traces of the missionary schools forever disappeared.

In the rebuilding of the city since 1880, the schools for Negroes present only a few problems of interest to the historian of school administration. These are the study of the increase of the Negro population and the efforts of school executives to house and teach this increase.

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[1]Memphis Public Ledger, July 13, 1875.

Housing the Negro Pupils

Previous to the Civil War the ratio of Negroes to whites in Memphis was relatively small, composing 17 per cent of the population. Between 1862, the date of the fall of Memphis, and the federal census of 1870 the number of Negroes increased 300 per cent. Being refugees, they came for the protection of the federal army and for the charitable bounties of the Freedmen's Bureau. The promise of 40 acres and a mule did not lure many to the cotton fields after the close of the war. When the board of education first took over the complete control of the colored schools in 1869-70, Negroes constituted 38 per cent of the total population. Even the yellow fever epidemics of 1873 and 1878 did not diminish their numbers by death or flight as it did the white inhabitants, for they exhibited, by comparison, a marked immunity to the disease. Their increase has paralleled that of the city and has remained approximately 40 per cent of the population each decade since the Civil War.

In the course of time, this large and ever increasing colored population was certain to be reflected in school enrollments. Even though the Negro population doubled between 1870 and 1890, yet the Negro school enrollment made only slight increase. In the absence of compulsory school attendance laws, many did not attend school, and practically all withdrew as soon as they were sufficiently mature to earn a pittance at menial labor, such was the stringency of their low standing in economic society. By 1900, however, the ratio of colored pupils to white pupils equalled the ratio of the colored population to that of the white,

TABLE 29

PER CENT NEGROES IN THE POPULATION BY DECADES

Year	Per Cent	Year	Per Cent
1860.....	17.1	1910.....	40.0
1870.....	38.4	1920.....	37.7
1880.....	44.3	1930.....	38.1
1890.....	44.5	1940.....	41.1
1900.....	48.7		

namely, about 43 per cent. The acceleration of Negro enrollment fell off, however, between 1930 and 1940. The same was true of the white enrollment (Table 30). The effects of the national depression account for the decline in accelerated enrollments in both systems of schools.

TABLE 30

WHITE AND COLORED SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS
BY DECADES FROM 1860 TO 1940

Year	White Enrollment	Per Cent Increase by Decades	Colored Enrollment	Per Cent Increase by Decades	Total School Enrollment	Per Cent Increase by Decades
1860.....	1,682	....	.....	....	1,682	....
1870.....	.....	....	.....	....	3,307	96.8
1880.....	2,782	....	1,588	....	4,370	25.0
1890.....	3,940	27.6	2,380	33.2	6,220	29.7
1900.....	6,130	39.8	4,644	48.7	10,774	77.4
1910.....	10,192	66.2	5,524	18.9	15,716	46.3
1920.....	16,691	63.7	9,288	68.1	25,979	65.3
1930.....	24,530	46.9	18,047	94.3	42,577	63.9
1940.....	28,207	14.5	19,482	7.1	47,689	12.0

Several reasons explain this accelerated school attendance of Negro children. First, education always is a luxury. The ability of the state to afford educational facilities for its children as well as the ability of the family to partake of them depends in the first instance upon the surplus taxes the state can appropriate and in the second upon the family income. The economic status of the Negro is steadily advancing and the family income permits the children to remain longer in school. Second, compulsory attendance laws have compelled large numbers to remain in school who otherwise would withdraw. Third, the Negro with sufficient education is now able, in Southern society, to compete with the white man in numerous pursuits formerly closed to him. This condition has brought hope and ambition to many colored

youths which has naturally been accompanied by a longer period of preparation in the school environment. And fourth, the average Negro family is far more prolific than the average white family.

The policy of ornamental brick schoolhouses for the Negroes soon had to be abandoned. The new city after 1890 experienced a steady and rapid growth in population (Fig. 1). The revenue of the city appropriated for schools did not keep pace with school increases. The board, in despair, resorted to frame buildings for Negroes. Between the turn of the century and 1920 the school board had in operation nine such frame buildings. Most of these frame buildings differed from the brick buildings of the same period erected for the white pupils in only one essential difference, the former were of wood construction and the latter were of brick. Soon many portables began to surround these wooden structures, so pressing were the numbers and so restricted the revenue, all of which presented a condition which makes one today wonder how those twenty years passed without a conflagration.

These frame buildings were abandoned as soon as possible. Under the superintendency of R. L. Jones, eight brick schoolhouses for Negroes were constructed, and under the superintendency of E. C. Ball five more have been erected and extensions have been added to five others. Practically all of the Negro pupils of Memphis today are housed in modern fireproof buildings comparable to those housing the white pupils.

Teachers for the Negro Schools

Procuring a competent teaching personnel for the colored schools has through the years remained an administrative problem which as yet is only partially solved. After three years of administration of the colored schools by the board of education, Superintendent Slaughter wrote in his annual report of 1873: "Based upon a practical experience of two sessions with the schools I am fully satisfied that, other things being equal in the selection of teachers, the true policy is colored teachers for colored schools."[1] Perhaps the superintendent in making this recommendation was acting from the forces of social pressure rather than from the evidences involved. With the rapid with-

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[1] Twenty-second Annual Report, 1872-83, op. cit., p. 23.

drawal of the northern white teachers, only southern white teachers remained to fill their ranks and few of them would accept an assignment which carried with it certain social stigma. Too, the colored citizens themselves seem to have supported this policy, for a city-wide mass meeting of colored citizens was convened in July, 1873, and petitioned the board as follows:

> Resolved, that in view of the fact that white teachers in our schools have failed so utterly for the last two years, and as we believe that their educational training is calculated to render them unfit for positions in our schools, therefore, we would most respectfully ask that the services of those be dispensed with.
>
> Resolved, that in view of the fact that we are prescribed by law to separate schools for our children upon the presumption of "inferiority," we respectfully ask that we have the benefit in full, and that every teacher from principal down be elected from the prescribed class.[1]

Although the board favored the policy of colored teachers for colored schools, there is much evidence to show that the policy was impractical. A study of the reports of the committee on teachers and textbooks between 1870 and 1875 shows that few Negro candidates for teaching positions could pass a creditable examination for teaching certificates. One of these reports is recited because it recommended a course of action which circumstances later forced the board to accept.

> At a special examination of two colored applicants your committee made an examination in the elementary principles of geography, grammar, and arithmetic. While we cannot recommend a full grade certificate to be issued owing to the character of the examination made, yet . . . . we are inclined to recommend a certificate to teach in the colored schools. We . . . . base our proceedings in the matter upon the necessities in the case, and suggest that teachers holding certificates to teach in the colored schools only, be paid a lower salary than those holding . . . . full grade certificates.[2]

The same committee a few months later reported that several colored teachers were incompetent to impart instruction in the higher branches and recommended the employment of white teachers in the place of those colored teachers who proved inefficient.[3] Exhaustive search of the records does not disclose that a single white person ever taught in these colored schools except those who have been termed northern missionaries. With the em-

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[1] Appeal, op. cit., July 5, 1873. [2] Ibid., Feb. 17, 1872.

[3] School Board Minutes, May 13, 1872.

ployment of B. K. Sampson in 1876, as principal of the colored schools and successor to Barnum, the teaching personnel has remained 100 per cent colored.

As early as 1877 the colored teachers were being paid the same salary as white teachers,[1] but economic and social forces were soon to change this policy. Necessity demanded that a different and easier examination be given to colored candidates for teacher certificates.[2] The southern Negro lived in a society antagonistic to his economic and social equality with the white race. School executives, like most other agencies employing colored workers, succumbed to social pressure and paid them less for their labor. This policy, further, was made easy by the retrenchments imposed upon school officials after the disastrous decade of the seventies. Sometime after 1880 (the exact year is not definitely known), all these forces relegated the colored teachers to a salary schedule considerably below that of the white teachers. This differentiation in income has practically been rectified within the last two years, and the salary schedules in the two systems are more nearly comparable than they have been within the past sixty years.

Secondary Education for the Negroes

Secondary education for the Negro race presented no problem until about 1890 and only a minor one at that until after the first World War. About 1888 a demand arose to provide high school instruction for a few ambitious colored pupils. In response to this demand the school board rented a frame building and employed two teachers. From this school a class of five pupils graduated in 1891, being the first high school graduating class of Negro pupils in the history of Memphis.[3] This modest beginning was soon outgrown and about ten years later a brick addition of six rooms was added to Clay Street school to house the colored high school which enrolled 113 pupils and graduated a

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[1] Appeal, op. cit., Sept. 16, 1877.

[2] School Board Minutes, May 13, 1872.

[3] G. P. Hamilton, Booker T. Washington High School, Retrospective Prospective, from 1889 to 1927. Memphis: Henderson Business College. Pages of book not numbered.

class of 13 in 1902.[1] Likewise this arrangement soon proved inadequate. Accordingly, the board abandoned Peabody School[2] as a white school and transformed it into Kortrecht High School for Negroes in 1910.[3] This building which could comfortably house 500 pupils remained the Negro high school for the next 16 years. In 1926, Booker T. Washington High School, a modern school plant of brick and reinforced concrete costing $350,000 was dedicated. Ten years later, in 1936, a second building, Manassas High School, similar in size, construction, and appointments was erected for

TABLE 31

NUMBER OF NEGRO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES BY YEARS*

Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number
1891....	5	1909....	16	1927....	72
1892....	6	1910....	18	1928....	131
1893....	15	1911....	7	1929....	212
1894....	7	1912....	15	1930....	167
1895....	No class	1913....	39	1931....	284
1896....	9	1914....	25	1932....	283
1897....	11	1915....	42	1933....	336
1898....	7	1916....	26	1934....	368
1899....	10	1917....	42	1935....	384
1900....	14	1918....	56	1936....	404
1901....	13	1919....	53	1937....	445
1902....	13	1920....	60	1938....	425
1903....	11	1921....	43	1939....	443
1904....	15	1922....	46	1940....	446
1905....	11	1923....	95	1941....	456
1906....	16	1924....	129	1942....	478
1907....	6	1925....	88	1943....	466
1908....	19	1926....	68	1944....	484

*Figures for first 37 years taken from G. P. Hamilton, op. cit.

[1] Report of the Board of Education of the City of Memphis, 1901-02, p. 54.

[2] Supra, pp. 43-44.

[3] Hamilton, op. cit. Pages of book not numbered.

colored pupils. It is impossible to study directly the high school enrollment by years, but the record of the number of graduates is available. When one considers that only about 16 per cent of the entire enrollment graduates each year it is possible to gauge the increase over the years.

Little, if any, differentiation has been made in administering the program of study in the colored and white systems of schools. Whatever of textbooks, courses of study, grade divisions, promotion practices, etc., have been instituted in the white schools, the same have likewise been inaugurated in the colored schools. All special supervision of instructional methodology has been in charge of white supervisors. Throughout, the only colored administrative officer has been the principal. So similar are the two systems in all mechanical features of administration that it is practically impossible from the records to make an evaluative historical study of the colored system.

CHAPTER VII

DEVELOPMENT OF GRADES, DEPARTMENTS, AND THE COURSE OF STUDY

This chapter undertakes to trace the development of grades and departments, of subject matter and its grade placement, and of methods of instruction in the Memphis City Schools; and, in so far as possible, the causes underlying successive changes. It is divided into three divisions; first, departmental and grade divisions; second, the elementary course of study; and third, the secondary school course of study.

Departmental and Grade Divisions

The early schools of Memphis have been referred to previously as ungraded, one-room, and one-teacher schools. There is no evidence that pupils were classified by departments or by grades before 1852. During the first four years of public education under Superintendent Pettit, the schools were purely elementary in character. He stated: "The course of instruction in the free schools is confined to the useful branches of an English education, and the pupils are accordingly engaged in spelling, reading, writing, mental and practical arithmetic, geography, English grammar, composition, history, and mental and moral philosophy."[1]

No doubt even in these one-room schools, there was some effort at the gradation of pupils--the younger ones taking reading, spelling, and writing, and the older ones taking geography, grammar, and history--for in this same account, Superintendent Pettit enumerates the pupils taking different subjects.[2]

That there was no advanced school is evidenced by his statement that, "Not being so fortunate as to be furnished at each schoolhouse with instruments and apparatus for demonstrations and illustrations in astronomy, chemistry, and natural philosophy, and the children being generally young, I have not seen

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[1] Appeal, op. cit., July 10, 1851. [2] Ibid.

proper to urge the prosecution of these departments upon them."[1]

With the advent in 1852 of the second superintendent, Dr. Ebbert, a gradation by departments emerged, embracing the higher branches, for he had the public press to carry the following announcement over his name:

> The schools are arranged into two divisions--male and female--and into three departments--primary, junior, and senior. In classifying the pupils, this arrangement will be strictly adhered to, departing from it only as the location and condition of schoolhouses may imperatively demand it. . . . . In the primary department will be taught, thoroughly, the rudiments of an English education. In the junior department besides constant exercises in reading, orthography, and penmanship, English grammar, arithmetic, geography, etc., will be taught. The senior department will include the higher English branches including mathematics and the classics.[2]

These three divisions evolved into the present organization of primary, elementary, and secondary school departments.

In these early schools it was the practice to segregate boys and girls from the first year primary through the senior department and to have the girls in all three departments taught by women teachers and the boys in the junior and senior departments taught exclusively by men teachers.[3]

The introduction of grades within each department was long delayed by inadequate houses. So long as school executives were compelled to rent small houses or stores just that long did the practice continue of a primary or a junior school embracing pupils of varying degrees of achievement and all taught by the same teacher. The only groupings possible were those established for recitation purposes. Before the outbreak of the Civil War the superintendent had urged the introduction of grades in the primary and junior departments,[4] but the war doomed the city schools to rented buildings for another ten years and consequently delayed a graded system of schools. Upon the termination of the war, W. Z. Mitchell, who had been both a teacher and principal in the Memphis schools was appointed superintendent. Under his leadership, the schools experienced among other things, the

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid., Sept. 28, 1852.

[3] Fifth Annual Report, 1856-57, op. cit., p. 20; Sixth Annual Report, 1857-58, op. cit., p. 16; Eighth Annual Report, 1859-60, op. cit., p. 22.

[4] Eighth Annual Report, 1859-60, op. cit., p. 16.

possession of its first school buildings, the publication of its first course of study, and the introduction of a graded system of schools. Terminating his first year as superintendent he states in his annual report:

> I would recommend a change so that the different grades shall be named, first, primary, second, grammar, and third high school, male and female. I would divide the primary and grammar schools into seven classes or grades--five in the primary, viz: 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th grades, and two in the Grammar, viz: 1st and 2nd grades.[1]

During this same year the superintendent and a corps of teachers composed and published a course of study by grades. This course encompassed a 7-4 system of schools.

This 7-4 system of grading endured until 1878, but in the meantime, the method of numbering the elementary grades underwent a change. A new course of study published in 1874 records the grades from the lowest as follows: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th.[2] A motion to increase the number of elementary grades from seven to eight was defeated in a board meeting in 1873,[3] but five years later, a rearrangement of grades ensued. An 8-3 division arose, the primary and grammar departments containing eight grades,[4] and the high school embracing three years.[5] The high school as a part of the free school system was severely attacked as an unnecessary luxury during the readjustment period of 1875-78, following the financial depression of 1873 and the local yellow fever epidemic of the same year. The reduction of the high school course of study from four to three years was a response to this clamorous attack. Since relatively few pupils of those years remained to finish high school, the benefits of this high school year were not lost, for an eighth grade was at the same time added to the elementary school where the numbers benefitted were greater than those of the senior year of high school.

This eighth grade had a hectic career for it shuttled

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[1] Fourteenth Annual Report, 1865-66, op. cit., p. 61.

[2] Course of Study and Principles of Instruction for the Use of the Memphis City Schools, pp. 3-32. Memphis: Boyle and Chapman, Printers, 1874.

[3] School Board Minutes, Aug. 11, 1873.

[4] Annual Report, 1876-77 and 1877-78, op. cit., pp. 67-74.

[5] Annual Report, 1878-79, op. cit., p. 61.

back and forth between the elementary and high schools more times than once. In 1884, this grade was detached from the elementary school and became, with but little change of subject matter, the first year of the high school.[1] By this transfer the favored 7-4 system was again created and the schools were divided into three departments, "To wit: The senior department, which shall include the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades; the intermediate department, which shall include the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh grades; and the primary department, which shall include the first, second, and third grades."[2]

By 1905, the 8-4 system had evolved. The eighth grade was again added to the elementary school in the autumn of 1904.[3] Apparently this action was necessitated by the textbooks which the market afforded, for the superintendent in making his recommendation stated: "This will enable us to complete arithmetic, our language or grammar series, and the geography series in the eighth grade which will be the last before entering high school."[4] Those pupils completing this eighth grade program were to receive a diploma which would admit them to high school without further examinations.[5]

In 1905, the high school course of study was also extended to four years. The reason given was: ". . . . The board of education came to the conclusion that the three years' course of study then in operation in the high school was not sufficient for pupils upon graduation to enter the best colleges and universities, and was not in keeping with the spirit of progress and the demands of the time."[6] This 8-4 system has endured to the present time. The changes in grades and departmental divisions are summarized in Table 32.

Upon assuming the superintendency in 1923, R. L. Jones was confronted with a stupendous building program. All elementary schools were overcrowded, and the ever increasing numbers

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[1] Manual of the Board of Education of the City of Memphis, Tennessee, pp. 33-41. Memphis: S. C. Toof and Co., Printers, 1884.

[2] Ibid., p. 55.

[3] Annual Report, 1902-03, op. cit., p. 68. [4] Ibid.

[5] Annual Report, 1903-04 and 1904-05, op. cit., p. 15.

[6] Annual Report, 1907-08, op. cit., p. 48.

TABLE 32

EVOLUTION OF DEPARTMENTS AND GRADES,
MEMPHIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Periods	One Room, One Teacher, Ungraded Schools	Sex Segregation	Men Teachers	Departments	Elementary Grades in Ascending Order	High School Grades in Ascending Order
1848-1852	Yes	Yes	Not specified	None	Ungraded	None
1852-1865	Yes	In junior and senior depts.	In junior and senior depts. for boys	Primary junior and senior	Ungraded	Ungraded
1865-1874	Several rooms in one bldg.	In grammar and high school depts.	In grammar and H. S. depts. for boys	Primary grammar and high school	7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1	Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior
1874-1878	Several rooms in one bldg.	In grammar and high school depts.	In grammar and H. S. depts. for boys	Primary grammar and high school	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	1st year 2nd year 3d year
1878-1884	Several rooms in one bldg.	In high school	In high school for boys	Primary grammar and high school	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	1st year 2nd year 3d year
1884-1906	Several rooms in one bldg.	Not specified	Not specified	Primary grammar and high school	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	8, 9, 10, 11
1906-1944	Several rooms in one bldg.	Coeducation throughout	Not specified	Primary Intermediate and high school	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	9, 10, 11, 12

attending high school demanded new accommodations.[1] He launched a junior high school building program which proposed not only to modernize school administration, but to relieve the pressure of numbers from below in the elementary school and likewise, from above in the high school. After thirteen years as superintendent, his building program was able to extend the 6-3-3 system to less than half of the pupil population.

In the meantime, the extension of the city limits found the city school board in possession of a few county schools, which through the years had developed all the characteristics of a typical consolidated rural school. Pupils from extended county districts were transported to these suburban consolidated schools, embracing all grades from 1 through 12. The incorporation of these schools into the city system has rendered more complex any systematic classification of schools. Since 1930, the 6-3-3 system has been discontinued. Today, Memphis schools are a motley mixture of various administrative groupings, commonly known as the 8-4 plan, the 6-3-3 plan, the 9-3 plan, the 6-6 plan, and the 1-12 plan.

The Elementary School Course of Study

The curriculum of the elementary school has for its purpose the development of those skills, understandings, habits, and appreciations which are basic for all advanced cultural development. This being so, the elementary school has experienced fewer changes in subject matter than any other level of school administration. Historically, changes have been, not so much on the elimination of old and the introduction of new courses, but in rearrangements of traditional subject matter and new methods of teaching it.

No course of study was published previous to 1865, but from booklists and superintendents' reports, some insight into the earliest elementary schools is possible. The first schools, opened in 1848, were strictly elementary, for the board of managers "resolved that the branches of education taught for the present should be the common branches of an English education,

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[1] Biennial Report of the Public Schools of the City of Memphis, Tenn., for the Scholastic Years 1922-23, and 1923-24, pp. 54-59.

and not the languages or classical education."[1] The first extant book list is in 1856,[2] and it shows that the schools at that time were teaching reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, grammar, geography, and history (Table 33). It is reasonable to assume that these same subjects composed the curriculum previous to that date. Vocal music was also taught whenever it was possible to procure teachers trained in this art, and calisthenics was a part of the daily program.

The chief objective of these early schools was a thorough mastery of the three R's. In 1856 Superintendent Merrill wrote:

> The tendency constantly is . . . . to multiply branches of study to an injudicious extent . . . . and the consequences are apt to be, that the pupils are required to devote too much time to study and frequently some of the lessons are imperfectly learned. . . . . The principle inculcated and acted upon is, to require little to be done daily, but that little to be done well. . . . . It is deemed better to have a single truth thus impressed upon the mind with all the reasons and explanations in connection with it, than a great number of facts so lightly considered as not to be remembered, and so rapidly learned as not to be understood. . . . . It has been made an object in our city schools, to simplify the courses of study and to require no more daily than can be thoroughly learned.[3]

This drill on the fundamentals consumed a school day of six hours and a school year of ten months.[4]

The secondary objectives of these early schools were the maintenance of bodily health and growth through systematized calisthenics, the inculcation of appreciation for music through vocal singing, and "to train and discipline the youth of the city in such a manner as to qualify them to become good and orderly citizens."

Another important feature of this early elementary school was the public examinations and exhibitions. In the beginning, exhibitions were primarily for the sake of publicity, but as time passed, they became real periods of examinations. The first of these was given by the first ward school in 1848 for the observation and enjoyment of the mayor and aldermen for whom the pupils

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[1] The Weekly Memphis Eagle, Aug. 3, 1848.

[2] Fifth Annual Report, 1856-57, op. cit., p. 21.

[3] Fourth Annual Report, 1855-56, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

[4] Ibid., p. 13.

recited poetry and declamations.[1] These exhibitions "consisted mainly in recitations and reviews of lessons, single and concert reading, declamation and singing."[2] Effort was made to have about one exhibition each week and to rotate these from school to school.[3] As time passed, the examination part of these public performances became less popular, and only the spectacular features, such as recitations, singing, declamations, orations, essays and the awarding of prizes were able to attract an audience. By 1873, these exhibitions had evolved into commencement programs which attracted such throngs that only the largest theatre auditorium could accommodate the occasion.[4]

Little change occurred in the elementary grades from their beginning until 1865. During this year, among other innovations,[5] a course of study was printed for both the elementary and the high school. This program (Table 33) retained all the subjects of the previous years and, in addition, attempted to enliven and modernize the traditional school by accentuating instruction in conversation, declamation, and recitals. By this program, grades were definitely established, seven in number, and the course of study designated not only the text and pages assigned each grade, but generalized instructions on teacher presentation of each. Supervision and uniformity were to be achieved by the office of the principal whose creation coincides with this movement. This course was severely criticized by Superintendent Leath in 1871. He insisted that the formal spelling book should be commenced immediately upon the completion of the primer, that the pupils in geography should learn to spell all words and terms in these books, and emphasis should be given to map drawing; grammar should begin before the fourth year although there were no books available to achieve this purpose.[6] Leath had a new course of study published in 1871, but the only significant change

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[1] Memphis Daily Enquirer, June 2, 1848.

[2] Fourth Annual Report, 1855-56, op. cit., p. 15.

[3] Ibid., p. 14.

[4] Twenty-second Annual Report, 1872-73, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

[5] Infra, pp. 168-169.

[6] Annual Report, 1870-71, op. cit., pp. 17-19.

was the introduction of the spelling book into the second year instead of the fourth as formerly.[1] In justification of this action, he said: "In old times, I know the spelling book immediately followed the primer, and this is the proper place for it."[2]

In 1873, Aaron Pickett became superintendent, and he turned his attention to the instruction program more intimately, perhaps, than any of his predecessors or successors. He published a revised course of study, demanded of the principals a leadership through their new duties as supervisors of instruction, and held weekly teacher meetings for the purpose of improving instructional methods. So far as subject matter was concerned, only two important changes were made by him in Leath's course of 1871. The first of these was in language arts. All the elements of language, such as reading, spelling, writing, pronunciation, punctuation, usage, grammar, composition, etc., were broken down into simpler divisions and dispersed over more grades than formerly, so that the steps in the learning process were not only simplified but their ascent on the curve of learning was made less steep.[3] The second was in the field of geography. Directions of the compass, right and left directions, and map drawing of the school building and grounds composed the first grade study. The second grade made a map study of the streets, highways, rivers, and railroads of Memphis and Shelby County. In the third grade, Tennessee and its neighboring states were studied in regard to exports, imports, occupations, cities, and geographical features. In the remaining grades the course was changed very little.[4]

More important than the subject matter changes introduced, was the philosophy of education which inspired its methodology. A section of seventeen pages of this publication is called "Principles of Instruction."[5] The doctrinal tenets embodied in this discourse are as defensible today as on the day of their publica-

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[1] Twentieth Annual Report, 1870-71, op. cit., p. 63.

[2] Ibid., p. 17.

[3] Course of Study and Principles of Instruction for the Use of the Memphis City Schools, pp. 1-19. Memphis: Boyle and Chapman, Printers, 1874.

[4] Ibid., pp. 26-29.

[5] Ibid., pp. 33-49.

tion. In each subject field and on each grade level, a conscientious effort was made to reduce the principles of instruction to a practical teaching methodology. An excellent precis of Pickett's educational philosophy has been preserved:

> The history of the past holds up to our view, if we will count through all its ages, a multitude of the truly great. All of these have arisen through one single path, the only path. In this path lie self culture, self reliance, self control, self support and love of right, knowledge and mental action. These things with all other kinds of mental culture are developed within; they spring from a fountain whose source is within the temple of the soul, made inaccessible to all external power, in the child and man alike. The mental structure called education that is erected in this secluded place is a life work. It will be beautiful or ugly, lofty or insignificant, strong or weak, solely according to the character and perseverance of the voluntary effort of the individual soul that dwells there. Neither love nor pity can directly raise one straw or move a dust of the balance to aid. All that the teacher can do is to stand without, and with wise words and pure example, guide and encourage. The Creator Himself encroaches not upon the sacred precincts. However much, therefore, of labor and skill may be demanded in the life of the teacher, all may be reduced to two single objects or aims: First, to present to the pupil proper and adequate inducements, and secondly, to present proper and sufficient guides to mental action. There can scarcely be a more self-evident proposition to the human mind, than that the pupil should be so instructed, that he will need less and less of these exterior inducements and guards as he advances and becomes more and more self sustaining, until, at length, through the works of God and men, without a special teacher, the soul alone shall find sufficient inducements, and the mind alone sufficient guides. The work of the teacher should gradually cease, but the building within should go on forever.[1]

Many forces beset this concept of elementary education and its advocate. Pickett was from the North and suffered the stigma of being a carpetbagger, imported to get the schools "out of a rut." His incumbency coincides with that period of despond in the history of Memphis occasioned by the national depression of 1873 and the aftermath of the local yellow fever epidemic of the same year. Pickett became the scapegoat for all public complaints against the schools. Two of the daily papers of that day, The Bulletin and The Avalanche, never lost an opportunity to ridicule his training, pronunciation, and honesty of purpose. Ex-Superintendent Slaughter attacked him severely in the public press.[2] Restive under the observing eye of strict supervision

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[1] Twenty-third Annual Report, 1873-74, op. cit., p. 15.

[2] Ledger, op. cit., 1875, June 24, 25, 26, and 30.

TABLE 33

ELEMENTARY COURSES TAUGHT AT ELEVEN SELECTED HISTORICAL DATES

Subjects	1856-57	1857-58	1859-60	1865-66	1874-75	1877-78	1880-81	1881-82	1908-09	1920-21	1936-37
Reading.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Writing.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spelling.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Arithmetic.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Geography.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Grammar.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Univ. history.....	x	x	x	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
U. S. history.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Dictionary.....	x	x	x	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Composition.....	..	..	x	x	..	..	x	x	x	x	x
Vocal music.....	x	x	x	x	..	..	x	..	x	x	x
Calisthenics.....	x	x	x	x	..	..	x	..	x	x	x
Conversation.....	..	..	..	x	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Declaration.....	..	..	..	x	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Recitals.....	..	..	..	x	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Abstracts.....	..	..	..	x	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Rhetoric.....	..	..	..	x	..	..	..	..	..	x	x
Art.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	x	x	x
Tennessee history.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	x	x	..
Physiology.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	x	..	..
Civics.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	x	x	x
Industrial arts...	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	x	..
Health.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	x
Science.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	x

and supported by public clamor, many teachers rebelled against the weekly teachers' meetings of the superintendent and against the "visionary and impractical" methods of Pickett's regime. Ever afterwards, supervision has been conducted under tight reigns of restraint from the superintendent's office.

For the next twenty-eight years the elementary course of

study remained practically unchanged. Leath for a second time succeeded to the superintendency in 1876. A revised course of study released by him sheared the program of all philosophy of education and particularized methods of instruction.[1] This negative policy was continued by Superintendents Collier (1880-1892), and Gordon (1892-1906). Twenty-eight years under Leath, Collier, and Gordon established the superintendent's duties primarily as selecting teachers, determining salaries, balancing the budget, administering the building program, and dealing with the public. Only secondarily, were they active in the supervision of instruction except that of selecting textbooks. Under such conditions principals became primarily guardians of pupils, school property and records, and only secondarily supervisors of instruction, and teacher initiative suffered from a lack of administrative cultivation. More recent efforts to emphasize these broader functions of central administration have not been altogether successful.

During the first decade of the new century, the "New City" of Memphis again grew to the age of accountability. Population increased 80 per cent, with a corresponding increase in the taxable values of real estate and school enrollments (Figs. 3 and 4). School receipts increased 100 per cent (Table 18). Seventeen new commodious brick school buildings were erected (Tables 5 and 6). Coincident with this growth, there came a revival in public education unsurpassed before or since. More genuine achievements were accomplished between 1900 and 1912 than in any other period of Memphis' history. In the elementary school, both the curriculum and the advantages of supervision were noticeably extended. In 1904, the eighth grade was added to the elementary school.[2] The office of assistant superintendent, which chiefly was a supervisory office, was recreated in 1902.[3] In addition to special supervisors already employed in the fields of music, writing, and physical culture, this period witnessed the employment of special supervision in the elementary grades for drawing, art, and manual training,[4] and a general supervisor of all primary grades.[5] The new subjects incorporated in the ele-

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[1] Twenty-fifth and Sixth Annual Report, 1875-76 and 1876-77, op. cit., pp. 67-73.

[2] Annual Report, 1902-03, op. cit., p. 68.

[3] Appeal, op.cit., July 15, 1902. [4] Ibid., Sept. 1, 1906.

[5] Annual Report, 1910-11, op. cit., p. 102.

mentary program were art, Tennessee history, physiology, and civics (Table 33).

The course in art was termed industrial arts. It had for its purpose the incorporation of a systematized work-study period into the school instruction program, which would supplement the social, recreational and industrial life of the child in out-of-school activities. The supervisor reported, "We have endeavored, as far as practical, to have the industrial exercises to spring directly from the immediate home and school interests and necessities, and at the same time to develop some of the work in arithmetic, reading, language, spelling, etc., out of the industrial exercises."[1] A typical unit in the primary grades was the home. Through the activity of building, papering, and furnishing a miniature home, the teacher developed her drawing, painting, designing, construction work, arithmetic, language, spelling, reading, etc.[2]

For the older pupils, above the fourth grade this work-study program in a few schools took the form of a garden club. In one school there were 85 gardens either in backyards or on vacant lots. This program correlated science, reading, spelling, arithmetic, and bookkeeping with a work program which had for its social objective, the useful employment of the child's energies in an activity economically profitable to himself and family and socially beneficial to the home and community as an agency of beautification.[3] These clubs proved too much of an undertaking for the schools to manage successfully and were soon abandoned.

Assistant Superintendent Jones, in 1908, organized the Story Tellers' League. It met twice monthly at Cossit Library, which is the public library. All available children's literature was classified as to types, interest appeal, and grade levels, for use of the teachers in classroom instruction. They also published a yearbook. Said the assistant superintendent, "So inspiring and successful has been the work of this league that it has greatly stimulated the work in the schools and the practical results are most gratifying."[4] Cossitt Library extended its serv-

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[1] Annual Report, 1907-08, op. cit., p. 66.

[2] Ibid., p. 67.

[3] Annual Report, 1910-11, op. cit., pp. 104-106.

[4] Annual Report, 1907-08, op. cit., p. 60.

ices to supply supplementary books to the grade teachers.[1] Subsequently, this library established a branch in each of the white schools of the city.

In 1910, the office of primary supervisor was established.[2] A local teacher of demonstrated ability was selected and sent to the University of Chicago for training, to take charge of this office. Primary supervision has been retained almost unbroken since that time, and primary instruction has remained more flexible and progressive to changing practices than any other segment of the school system.

Auxiliary Audubon Societies were organized among the children of all schools for the preservation of birds. Besides instruction upon the types of birds, their habits and importance, the manual training classes turned their hands and tools toward the erection and location of bird houses.[3]

Field Days became an annual affair of the elementary schools. Upon these occasions, thousands of children from all the schools assembled in a common exhibition place before crowded throngs of citizens and performed calisthenic drills appropriate in difficulty of execution to the grade level and physical maturity of those engaged. The purposes of these field days were to lend a "greater uniformity of aim" and a "more altruistic spirit to this work in the schools," and to present something "highly educative to the public" regarding school life.[4]

Summer schools were opened in 1911 for those pupils who had failed in one or more subjects.[5] These summer sessions were later extended to include high school pupils. Summer schools continued to be an important part of the regular program until the depression beginning in 1929. Shortly thereafter, they were dispensed with and only during the past three years have they been reëstablished, and then only in a restricted sense for they are open only to eleventh and twelfth grade pupils to accelerate their graduation in war time.

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[1] Annual Report, 1910-11, op. cit., p. 102.

[2] Ibid., p. 102.

[3] Ibid., p. 80.

[4] Annual Report, 1907-08, op. cit., p. 65, also Annual Report 1910-11, op. cit., pp. 87 and 97.

[5] Ibid., p. 89.

A program for in-service training of teachers was started during this period. Periodic departmental or grade meetings under the direction of either the assistant superintendent or one of the supervisors became a part of the regular duties of teachers. Improved methods of teaching old subjects and primary instruction in teaching the new subjects were the chief purpose of these meetings. Out of this program, developed two voluntary associations which also made a contribution to teacher growth and development, namely the Story Tellers' League and the Teachers' Educational League. The latter was a professional organization of local teachers.

A final element among the changes of this period was the election to the superintendency of I. C. McNeil. McNeil brought a degree of training, and experience to his office which enabled him to exercise leadership in a progressive era. He had been a high school principal and assistant superintendent in Kansas City, Missouri, and president of the State Normal College at West Superior, Wisconsin. Further, he was an author of widely used school textbooks.[1] Like Pickett thirty-nine years previously, his professional leadership was seriously embarrassed by a spirit of provincialism,[2] and unceremoniously, he was dismissed after two and one-half years.[3]

During the modern period dating from 1912, very little has been done through administrative officers different from that which has been discussed. Starting about 1920, a general shop program was gradually introduced into the upper grades of the grammar schools, and at about this same time home economics was presented in this department for girls. Many achievements, however, have been realized. Practically all teachers employed in modern times are not only well trained academically but also professionally. Modern textbooks and teaching materials in general have automatically brought about more improvement in the psychological arrangement and presentation of subject matter than could possibly be achieved by local curriculum committees.

The retrenchments following 1930 arrested much of the supervisory services in elementary education. As a retrenchment measure the supervisors of writing, art, and physical education

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[1] Appeal, op. cit., Mar. 19, 1907.

[2] Ibid., July 13, 1909. [3] Ibid.

were abolished. To this day, they are considered as dispensable services. A similar fate was met by the general shop and home economic programs provided for grammar grade pupils.

The Secondary School Course of Study

In the early stages of public education in Memphis, school executives made arrangements for a free secondary school as well as for a free elementary school. The necessity of maintaining secondary schools was best stated by Superintendent Leroy Pope (1856-60; Table 26):

> . . . . The South and West will long continue to present one of the noblest fields for classical and mathematical attainment. The yet undeveloped mineral and agricultural wealth of this spreading valley, the embryo mechanical power, will require the guiding hand of science to unfold their mysteries and wield their energies to the great purposes of social, individual, and national advancement. Why should not our schools furnish our own engineers, our own geologists, our own chemists, our own scientific explorers and geographers, and our own skillful and educated planters?[1]

To vouchsafe the authority to administer public secondary education, those responsible had included in the first charter organizing the schools as a separate political corporation, the privilege of maintaining "higher branches of study than those usually taught in the city schools."[2] So,when the storm later broke over secondary education, the board of education was fully clothed with legal authority for its actions. So long as the public mind was buoyant, because it believed in the future greatness of the municipality, there was little audible opposition to a free system of secondary education, but when the wastes of war, plagues, and bankruptcy spread despair and doubt in the public mind, the high school at public expense came under severe attack.[3]

Only an elementary school prevailed during the first four years following 1848, but in September, 1852, a secondary system of schools was opened under the name of senior department, the boys and girls being separated into two different locations.[4] No

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[1] Fifth Annual Report, 1856-57, op. cit., p. 10.

[2] Public Acts of the State of Tennessee, 1857-58, op. cit., sec. 4, p. 401.

[3] Supra, pp.73-74. [4] Appeal, op. cit., Sept. 28, 1852.

course of study for the department is extant until after the war period. From statements and book lists, however, some insight into their instruction program may be gleaned. When first opened, their program included the higher English branches, mathematics, and the classics.[1] Two years later three senior schools were opened, one classical, one commercial, and one female.[2] Evidently some election entered at this time to permit the boys to take less of Latin and more of the practical in terms of bookkeeping and applied arithmetic.

The records do not reveal the number of years or the grades embraced in the senior department previous to 1865. In the field of English, reading, grammar, and composition were taught but no English nor American literature is recorded. In the field of mathematics, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and surveying were taught. The field of science included natural philosophy (physics), physiology, chemistry, and astronomy. The classics included about three or four years of Latin and one or two years of Greek. Social studies included about one year of geography and one of history. There remained a few scattered subjects such as bookkeeping, logic, mental philosophy, and vocal music.[3] So few were in attendance upon these senior schools that it is probable that each pupil worked more or less at his own rate of speed, and as a consequence, no definite grades or years were necessary or possible.

Immediately after the close of the Civil War, a renaissance in public schools occurred. Between 1865 and 1873, the first professional school man was elected superintendent, a new school charter was enacted, the public school system was extended to include the Negro population, the first large and permanent brick school buildings were built, revenue available for public schools, as well as the numbers enrolled, trebled, the office of principal was instituted, supervision made its debut, the curriculum was materially expanded, and the first course of study was composed and published.

This course of study inaugurated a graded system of schools, including seven grades in the elementary and four in the

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[1] Ibid. [2] Second Annual Report, 1853-54, op. cit., p. 9.

[3] Fifth Annual Report, 1856-57, op. cit., p. 21, and Eighth Annual Report, 1859-60, op. cit., p. 24.

high school. The high school course of study offerings in the various fields were as follows: In the field of English--reading, composition, spelling, rhetoric, English literature, and declamation; in the field of mathematics--arithmetic, algebra, plane geometry, trigonometry, analytical geometry, surveying, calculus, and civil engineering; in the field of languages--four years of Latin, two years of Greek, and two years of French; in the field of the sciences--physical geography, natural philosophy, physiology, chemistry, geology, zoology, and botany; in the field of social studies--geography, ancient history, modern history, United States history, and the constitution of the United States; and there were a few scattered subjects, such as bookkeeping, logic, mental philosophy, penmanship, criticism, and music.[1] (Table 34.)

With the election of J. T. Leath to the superintendency in 1869, a temporary arrest of the progressive forces was realized. The high school program just recited was curtailed. The male high school retained the subjects of this program, remaining a four-year course, whereas the girls' high school program, after eliminating the Latin and Greek languages, was reduced to a three year program.[2] No reasons are related for this differentiation. Apparently the education of girls was not at that time as important as the education of boys. The four-year course for the boys was divided into two curricula, the classical and the English. The latter omitted the Latin and Greek of the former and substituted therefor more of literature, science, and social studies.[3] By 1871, Leath had reduced both the boys' and the girls' program to three years. The three-year course reduced the number of offerings from 35 to 15 (Table 34). The course consisted in two parallel programs, the general and the classical. Those pupils in the general course took two years of history and one of chemistry in lieu of three years of Latin, and one year each of rhetoric and mental philosophy instead of two years of Greek. All boys took bookkeeping where the girls took botany.[4] Practically without alteration, this three year high school course of study

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[1] Sixteenth Annual Report, 1867-68, op. cit., pp. 72-78.

[2] Annual Report, 1869-70, op. cit., pp. 26-30. [3] Ibid.

[4] Annual Report, 1870-71, op. cit., pp. 73-75.

TABLE 34

HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS OFFERED AT SIX SELECT HISTORICAL DATES

Subject	1857	1860	1868	1871	1881	1884	1906	1939
Reading.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Grammar.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Composition.	x	x	x	-	x	x	x	x
Arithmetic..	x	x	x	x	x	x	-	x
Algebra.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Pl. Geom....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Surveying...	x	-	x	-	-	-	-	-
Nat.Philos..	x	x	x	x	x	x	-	-
Astronomy...	x	x	-	-	-	-	-	-
Geography...	x	x	x	-	-	x	-	x
Bookkeeping.	x	x	x	x	-	x	x	x
Chemistry...	x	x	x	x	x	x	-	x
Physiology..	x	x	x	-	x	x	x	-
Latin.....	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Greek.....	x	x	x	x	-	-	-	-
Anc. Hist...	x	x	x	-	-	-	x	x
Mod. Hist...	x	x	x	x	-	-	x	x
U.S. Hist...	-	-	-	-	-	x	x	x
Logic.....	-	x	x	-	-	-	-	-
Mental Phil.	-	x	x	x	-	-	-	-
Writing.....	-	x	x	-	-	-	-	-
Music.....	-	x	x	-	-	-	x	x
Spelling....	-	-	x	-	-	x	-	-
Declamation.	-	-	x	-	-	x	-	-
French.....	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	x
Eng. Lit....	-	-	x	-	x	x	-	x
Phys. Geog..	-	-	x	-	x	x	x	-
Trigonometry	-	-	x	x	-	-	-	x
Anal. Geom..	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	-
Geology.....	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	-
Zoology.....	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	-
Botany.....	-	-	x	x	-	-	-	-
Civil Eng...	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	-
Rhetoric....	-	-	x	x	x	-	-	x

Subject	1857	1860	1868	1871	1881	1884	1906	1939
Calculus.....	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	-
Criticism....	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	-
Const.of U.S.	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	-
Orthography..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Etymology....	-	-	-	-	x	x	-	-
Am. Lit.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Speech Arts..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Physics.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Civics.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Mech. Draw...	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Com. Arith...	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
German.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	-
Eng. Hist....	-	-	-	-	x	x	-	-
Solid Geom...	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Biology.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Domestic Sci.	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Spanish.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Stenography..	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Typewriting..	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Phys. Educ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Wood Shop....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Metal Shop...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Com. Law.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x
Machine Shop.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Auto Mechanics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Radio Shop...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Aviation.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Cosmetology..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Brick Masonry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Electric Shop	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Printing.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Art.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Salesmanship.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x

endured for thirteen years, from 1871 to 1884. It spanned the tragic era in Memphis' history, and this accounts for its longevity.

When finally the eighth grade came into being, it had difficulty in finding its locus. In 1881, an eighth grade, for the first time, appears in the course of study and is the final grade of the elementary school,[1] but in 1884 an odd thing happened. After having been advocated for several years, an eighth grade became the first year of the high school instead of the last grade of the grammar school.[2] Thus, the 7-4 system favored in so many parts of the south was reintroduced.

This new eighth grade course of study consisted chiefly of reviews in reading, spelling, writing, grammar, arithmetic, geography, and history. Algebra and physiology were the new subjects added. Two reasons may be recorded for this course of action. First, so few pupils continued their formal education in high school, that it was deemed wise and expedient to add this extra grade where it would benefit the largest numbers, and, at the same time, more nearly perfect those common and useful branches of an English education. Second, the new taxing district government gave promise of brighter days to come and more revenue with which to finance the system. The subject matter of the remaining high school grades, the 9th, 10th, and 11th, remained practically unchanged from that of former years (Table 34).

This 7-4 system lasted until 1905, at which time it was supplanted by an 8-4 system.[3] This extra high school grade was dictated by several forces. The city was now experiencing a rapid growth,[4] and the impact of school enrollments[5] was now most noticeable in the secondary department. A rearrangement of old, and the introduction of new subject matter was imperative to meet the needs of this new school citizenship. More graduates were now continuing their education at the college level, and the high school must now take stock of its preparatory function. The high

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[1] Annual Report, 1881-82, op. cit., p. 40.

[2] Manual of the Board of Education, 1884, op. cit., pp. 33-41.

[3] Annual Report, 1903-04 and 1904-05, op. cit., p. 42.

[4] Supra, p. 52. [5] Supra, p. 58.

school had a new terminal function to fit its products into the business and industrial pursuits of a growing city. Finally, the textbooks, the established American pattern of secondary education, and the standardizing agencies, compelled all to a four year high school, beginning with the ninth grade.

The high school course of study, published in 1905, introduced, in addition to a new ninth grade, a dozen or more new courses. These were music, civics, physics, biology, solid geometry, German, Spanish, domestic science, stenography, typewriting, commercial law, mechanical drawing, and physical culture. Furthermore, the course was divided into three parallel programs, a general course, a commercial course, and a university preparatory course. The preparatory course featured, besides the Latin and modern languages, all courses in mathematics, English, science and social science. The commercial course embraced, of course, bookkeeping, typewriting, stenography, commercial law, commercial arithmetic, and, in addition, elections from among almost all other subjects. The general course was what the name implies, a logical selection from the entire high school program.

This program marks the first genuine effort of the high school to break with the traditionally academic and to give recognition to vocational, utilitarian subjects. Five years later, this recognition was further emphasized. With the opening of the new Central High School[1] the old high school on Poplar Street was converted into a Vocational Grammar and High School.[2] The particular emphasis in the curriculum of this school was on the newer vocational subjects. Among the vocational subjects the girls took domestic arts, including sewing, dressmaking, embroidery, and millinery, and domestic science including the cooking, serving, chemistry, hygiene and preservation of foods. The boys studied architectural and mechanical drawing, joinery and cabinet making. Both the boys and the girls could take drawing and design, bookkeeping, typewriting, stenography, and salesmanship. Among the non-vocational subjects, emphasis was on the traditional mathematics, science, social science, and English courses. Modern languages were not taught and Latin was minimized. This school is yet maintained in one of the most modern buildings of

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[1] Supra, p. 58.

[2] Annual Report, 1915-16, op. cit., p. 57.

the city under the name of the Technical School, but the emphasis today has shifted back to the academic, and although it may be termed comprehensive, it is nevertheless no more vocational nor technical than some of the other high schools not so designated by name.

The program in recent years has undergone very little change. The most popular and the best taught are the traditionally academic subjects. Of the newer subjects, the commercial and domestic science subjects are the best taught and most popular. The schools have learned to synchronize them into the traditional school and to produce learning results. Such has not been the case with the newer technical subjects. A high school in Memphis may embrace, in the same plant under one principal, the upper three years, the upper four years, the upper six years, or all grades from one to twelve inclusive. Some of these schools have large numbers but relatively small senior high school departments. Modern shop programs, varied in nature, can be financed and populated with pupils only in large schools. The building program and the grade grouping of school units is militating against the development of technical education. In many instances this program has suffered from the want of technically trained teachers, insufficient supply of machines, tools, and raw materials, and from the unsympathetic support of principals and administrators in general.

The development of grade and departmental divisions and the course of study was influenced by several social forces. Before the Civil War school executives advocated the introduction of grades and the office of principal, but such innovations called for the congregation of large numbers of pupils in one building. The political conditions of the community failed to provide large school buildings until after the war, and the employment of grades and the office of principal was that long delayed. When the impact of school enrollments in the modern period made necessary the extension of the school services to meet society's needs, the 8-4 system replaced the 7-3 system and the curriculum offerings were vastly extended.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has revealed three significant developments. First, Memphis was one of the early cities of the United States to evolve a pattern of lay control of public education. The board of mayor and aldermen during the first year of school existence initiated the policy of delegating administrative authority to functionaries responsible to the board. Within a period of eight years after 1848 all powers of school management were shifted from the board of mayor and aldermen to a lay board of school visitors.

Second, the method of executive control of the schools underwent several changes during the first seventy-five years of the history of the schools. Experimentation was made with a board composed of a few members, with a board composed of many members, and with a system of board committees. Gradually through the years, additional areas of school management continued to be reposed in professional men and women employed by the board. By 1925 complete professionalization of school administration was realized.

Third, the schools have been closely associated with the development of community life. Cultural programs in Memphis were marked by many difficulties and tragedies. The social, political, and economic forces, which assisted or thwarted community development, contributed to the fortunes and misfortunes of the schools in their march of progress.

The transfer of the Management of the Schools from Political to Lay Control

Memphis was among the first cities in Tennessee to receive from the state legislature the powers to establish free schools and to levy a tax for their maintenance. When the city charter was revised in 1848, provision was made that the board of mayor and aldermen could establish and maintain a system of free schools for white children. For the realization of this purpose,

they were permitted to spend one-eighth of the revenue raised by the city.

Immediately, the civil officers began to set in motion a policy which has become common in urban school administration in America. It is significant that this pattern developed early in Memphis. In the very beginning, the board of mayor and aldermen chose to become a policy making body, delegating the acts of school control to persons or groups of persons. The acts by which the board of mayor and aldermen divested themselves of the administrative control of schools may be summarized as follows:

1) Administrative powers were delegated to individual aldermen. At first, the aldermen from each ward were empowered to rent the building, employ the teacher, and to provide for the fuel, and all other necessary details. All such acts had to have the approval or rejection of the council. On occasions, a committee of aldermen was appointed to make inspections and to bring before the council recommendations for school improvement. At another time the entire board was divided into three committees, each to have charge of the schools in their respective portions of the city. Finally, a committee of aldermen were empowered to manage all of the schools, their actions to have council approval.
2) The board of mayor and aldermen, almost from the very beginning of the public schools, employed a superintendent. After six months of experience in operating free schools, the office of superintendent was authorized. The aldermen, whether acting as a body, as a committee, or as individuals, looked to this officer for advice and leadership.
3) From the earliest beginning, the board of mayor and aldermen relied upon the assistance of lay citizens to assist in school management. The first committee appointed to manage the schools was composed of the mayor, two aldermen, and two citizens. For a period of about three years, citizens were eliminated from the aldermanic committee. In 1852, however, a committee of seven citizens was appointed to act as an advisory body to the aldermanic committee on education.
4) From the vigorous leadership of those citizens who served in an advisory capacity, there ensued the separation of school management from the board of mayor and aldermen. The board of school visitors was incorporated in 1856. By this charter all

administrative powers over the schools were transferred from the board of mayor and aldermen to the board of school visitors, who were appointed by the mayor. By charter amendment in 1858, membership in the board of school visitors was dependent upon popular vote.

Thus within a decade, from 1848 to 1858, complete administrative control of the schools passed from the civil officers of the municipality to an incorporated body of laymen elected by popular vote. This method of evolution from political to lay control as well as this pattern of lay control has been experienced by many of the cities of America. Its uniqueness in this instance is the accelerated pace at which it was performed, and the early date at which it was consummated.

The records reveal two forces which appear to have accounted for this rapid development. First, the administration of the schools was a duty peculiarly different from the other duties to which aldermen were accustomed. The schools originated very largely from the demands of the "common people," or the laboring classes, which thronged into the growing town. Their voices, while loud in demand of free schools, were singularly quiet regarding other municipal needs, such as street pavings, wharfs, railroads, and public hygiene. Aldermen knew how, or at least they thought they knew how, to deal with the professional, business, and commercial groups who were interested in such matters as fire and police protection, in improved transportation facilities, in city taxes, and in municipal finance. Such affairs always had been the customary affairs of government. This new obligation, however, of operating schools was strangely different. It was an undertaking peculiarly related to the interests, judgments, and opinions of all classes, and particularly to those of the laboring classes.

Second, the board of aldermen did not have the necessary time to devote to the schools. An alderman, in addition to being a public official, was, in a majority of cases a business or a professional man. The new system of schools had increased his duties in a field foreign to accustomed politics and irksome to his mental habits. The first ten years of the life of the schools spanned that period in the life of the municipality when the interests of public officials were centered on better and more wharfs for river transports, on the improvement of the streets

for local commerce, on plank roads radiating from Memphis, and on future railroad development. The business of managing the schools appealed chiefly to those whose peculiar talents and interests commended them for the control of this new community undertaking and whose duties were not so multifarious.

Soon, therefore, the aldermen sought a way to divert the problem of school management from the municipal council chamber to the people. The first four years of the schools under aldermanic control was a period of disagreement and instability of policy on the part of the council. The one, and perhaps the only, unifying force to produce agreement out of discord was the advice and leadership of the superintendent, the creation of whose office was the supreme piece of wisdom displayed by the council. At first the aldermen in each ward were made responsible for the school in their ward. This action had for its design to relate school management to that elected official who was nearest to the people. Under this plan, the aldermen acting individually found themselves strangers to this new community problem in the same manner as the aldermen when acting collectively. This plan having proved unpopular, the board of visitors was established. Because of the many disagreements between the two boards it was mutually decided by both boards, and recommended by many citizens, to have a lay board incorporated with complete powers to administer the schools, independent of municipal control. As a result, such a charter was enacted just eight years after the opening of the first public school. The only power retained by the city was the power to levy and collect the educational tax. This legal arrangement of school control has existed since 1856, or for eighty-nine years.

The Transfer of the Management of the Schools from Lay to Professional Control

Shortly after incorporation, the board of education organized itself into committees in order to affect a division of labor involved in school management. The committees undertook the examination, certification, employment, and dismissal of teachers; the renting, repair, purchase, and erection of buildings; the selection of textbooks and the preparation of courses of study; and the management of school finance. These committees functioned acceptably in the relatively simple society of the pre-

Civil War period, characterized by small pupil enrollments, housed in rented quarters where gradation of pupils and courses of study were simple matters. In the post-war period, however, new social trends emerged. The schools had to be graded and divided into departments, large and expensive buildings had to be planned and erected, more financial credit in various forms had to be negotiated, a more expert method of fiscal management became necessary, and a school system had to be provided for the Negro population.

To discharge the increased administrative loads, the solution lay, so it was thought, in increasing the number of laymen obligated to its performance. Accordingly, the membership of the board of education was doubled, and likewise the number of committees. This type of school administration proved to be the poorest of any adopted previously or since in the history of Memphis. It exhibited a divided council on many of the progressive issues previous to the disastrous epidemic and depression of 1873, and became demoralized when confronted with the social demands for retrenchment which followed that date. In regular meetings and in numerous called meetings of the board, the records reveal many charges and counter charges impeaching men's motives. Within fifteen years they employed seven different superintendents, and they held several trials of teachers and principals before the committee on appeals, a few of the trials lasted for weeks. The ability of the board to work coöperatively with the city government, upon which they were dependent for revenue, was no improvement over their relationships with their own superintendents. Only one newspaper of the city ever spoke in their defense.

The second yellow fever epidemic, in 1878, and its fatal consequences to the municipality brought a change in the composition of the board. In building the "New City" after 1880, experience with a large wrangling board, broken into factions, demanded a change. The board membership was, therefore, reduced to five, and the members were elected from the city at large. This five-member board has been the legal agent of school administration throughout the life of the "New City." During the past sixty years, this board has by gradual steps relinquished administrative control of the schools to the superintendent and a line and staff personnel.

From its earliest days, the Memphis School System has possessed two elements in its organization which encouraged the transfer of administrative acts from the board to professional agents. The first of these was the existence of the office of superintendent from almost the inception of the system itself, in 1848. When board members encountered problems which encroached too heavily upon their time or demanded a training foreign to their experience, the easiest way out was to transfer the problem to the superintendent for study and recommendations. In this way, the superintendent acquired his duties and powers by gradual steps somewhat as follows:

1) Under the ordinance of 1848 defining his duties, he was charged with the responsibilities of administering the program of pupil personnel, of administering the course of study, of being present at all board meetings, and from his experience to make suggestions to constituted authority for the improvement of the schools, and to make reports to such authority whenever demanded.
2) By training, board members were unprepared to grade the schools and to revise courses of study. When this movement started in a broad and progressive manner in 1866, the superintendent assumed the full responsibility for the classification of pupils into grades and for the preparation of the course of study for each grade.
3) Soon thereafter, the superintendent was made an ex-officio member of the committee on the selection and certification of teachers and the committee on the selection of textbooks.
4) The recommendation for employment, and the supervision of janitors was next added to his duties.
5) He was charged with the supervision of the payroll and the invoice of all school properties.
6) With the advent of the small board, he soon became an ex-officio member of all committees. From this vantage point he became the chief adviser of the board in the formation of policies pertaining to all phases of school management, and more and more to him and his subordinates were delegated the power to carry these policies into execution.

The second factor in the school situation which facilitated the transfer of administrative acts to professional agents

was the early and continuous existence of the office of school board secretary, in recent years called secretary and business manager. By legal provision, this office has existed since 1858. In the simple conditions of the schools previous to 1865, his duties were primarily to keep the board minutes, to draw all drafts, and to keep a system of accounts. As the system grew, this office likewise increased in importance. All business procedures were finally centered in the secretary's office, also the repair, maintenance, and upkeep of school buildings. Committees on audits, purchase of supplies, finance, and repair of buildings found it expedient to transfer their functions to this officer. Only seven different men have held this office in the past seventy-seven years. In many school matters, their knowledge was more extensive than that of the superintendent or any board member. Such circumstances invited confidence and the delegation of more details of school management to this official.

By 1925, board committees had ceased to be of any value. The performance of their duties had gradually gravitated either to the superintendent or to the secretary. Of course, these two men could not discharge the manifold duties which by accretion, time had evolved. As they gathered more power, other subordinate agents were called into being to share these responsibilities.

The first of these was the school principal. The origin of the office of principal coincides with the introduction of the graded school system and the erection of large buildings in the post-Civil War period of reawakening. The principal assumed many duties formerly discharged by the superintendent, such as the admission of pupils, the visitation to classrooms to observe and improve instruction, and the collection and summarization of all records for his school. He became the agent to link the pupil and his school to the family and community. By delegating to the principal a segment of the school system to administer in all its details, the superintendent was able to devote more of his energies to the problems of centralized control.

The office of supervisor was created, at first to teach the special subjects, but later to assist both the superintendent and principal in improving instruction in the traditional as well as in the special subjects.

The office of assistant superintendent has been created and abolished at several different periods. His duties have cen-

tered around the management of the system of Negro schools, administration of pupil attendance, supervision of supervisors, administration of psychological and educational tests, the improvement of record forms, the revision of the curriculum, and the management of school libraries.

The office of the secretary and business manager likewise had several employees added to assist in the execution of the business affairs of the board. These are, the accountant, bookkeepers, clerks, building engineer, and the foremen of repair, upkeep, and maintenance crews.

The administration of the schools by professional agents required about seventy-five years to fully develop. The board now is a legislative body. All matters pertaining to the schools are presented to the board by the superintendent. After consideration, recommendations are approved or rejected by the board. Those approved are delegated to the proper functionaries for execution.

The Impact of the Social, Economic, and Political Forces at Different Periods on the Development of the Schools as a Local Social Institution

The development of public education in America had its beginnings in the efforts of local communities to educate their own children through local taxation. Such a movement started in Memphis many years before the state of Tennessee had even contemplated the establishment of a state system of common schools. The struggle to develop a school system was seriously impeded by almost insurmountable difficulties, but through perseverance and through the selection of able lay and professional leaders the schools managed to survive continuously and to become firmly established, as at present. Through this study it is possible to identify the social, economic, and political forces which thwarted or assisted school development, and to point out the means by which the schools progressed.

The period from 1848 to 1860 represents the efforts of the municipality to attain commercial importance. During this period its population increased from 1,799 to 22,623, its taxable wealth from $1,000,000 to over $18,000,000, its cotton trade from 1 1/2 million dollars to 18 1/2 million. Its population came hither from the tide water region, from the north, from Ireland,

from Germany, and a scattering few from other countries. Three levels of society, found Memphis attractive: those who were engaged in trade, commerce, and professional pursuits, those who composed a class of artisans and shopkeepers, and those who performed manual labor. In this frontier urban community life was relatively simple but severe. Most men of all classes were struggling to establish their fortunes, and their means of doing so was inextricably interwoven with the fortunes of the city and the regions far and near upon which it was dependent for its future greatness. Men's interest centered on the means of making Memphis prosperous and on those national issues which could assist them in this achievement. The national issues of local importance were westward expansion and internal improvement. At home, interests centered primarily in those local achievements which facilitated the movement of articles of trade. Local issues were, therefore, plank roads leading into Memphis, hard-surfaced streets within the city, and railroads branching in all directions. Associated with this plan of future greatness and community security was the desire of the citizens to educate their children. Out of this community design to build an integrated society, public schools were early established, in 1848.

To attain the materialistic goals, city officials plunged the young town into debt. The debts were not especially exorbitant, but the tragedy lay in the fact that after having thus burdened the city little was left to show for the debt. "This deplorable situation was due to a combination of indifference, graft, and downright ignorance on the part of the aldermen."

Schools generally develop from the excess wealth of a community. Memphis was no exception to this. As important as schools were in the developing social matrix, they could wait upon a later date for adequate support. To postpone the realization of those necessary materialistic advantages, would be economically disastrous to the city's future. Not so with the schools. So for twelve years previous to the Civil War, the schools were meagerly supported. In spite of well thought out plans for a building program and in spite of the urgent pleas of school leaders and interested citizens, the schools throughout this period continued to be housed in poorly adapted rented quarters. During this initial stage of school development, however, a broad basis for the future growth of the school was laid. The

schools during this period were ably managed by superintendents and visitors, distinguished in the annals of the city for their personal attainments and social leadership. The inception of a graded system of schools was begun by the introduction of the primary, junior, and senior departments in 1852. This period also witnessed, as has been previously stated, the inauguration of the professional offices of superintendent and secretary, and the incorporation of the board of visitors.

The social, economic, and political forces, which played upon the community life of Memphis during the period of the Civil War and reconstruction, left a most indelible imprint upon the course of school development. This period included the years 1860 to 1873. Federal army strategy embraced the plan of driving a wedge through the confederated states down the Mississippi from Cairo to the Gulf. Memphis was captured in 1862, and thereafter became an important base, both of supply and command, for the federal forces. The stimulation of trade, occasioned by the war, attracted a migration to the city, which practically doubled its population between 1860 and 1870. About one-half of this influx was Negroes and most of the others came from northern states. The northern immigrant was inspired by motives of business opportunities and of social reform. The Negroes sought the security and physical comforts provided by the occupying federal army. The economic life of the city steadily progressed until arrested by the yellow fever epidemic and the national depression of 1873. In spite of the war, prosperity pointed upward and new and vigorous nationalistic elements entered community life to assist in the building of its culture.

The amalgamation of these new social elements into community life brought a renaissance to the school system. During this period the following changes occurred:

1. A new charter was procured which doubled the board membership and transferred the election of members from the hands of the mayor to the electorate of the wards.
2. School men for the first time were elected to the superintendency.
3. The amount of revenue to support the schools was trebled.
4. The first school buildings were built. All contained 8 or more classrooms. Three were of brick and two were of frame construction.

5. A system of public schools for Negroes was organized and put into operation.
6. A 7-4 graded system of schools was inaugurated.
7. A course of study for both the elementary and secondary schools was prepared and published.
8. The office of assistant superintendent was for the first time created.
9. The office of school principal was first established.
10. Supervision of special subjects of instruction was inaugurated.

Many mild epidemics of yellow fever and cholera had visited Memphis during its existence, but in 1873, a yellow fever epidemic of fatal proportions occurred. Fear seized the populace. Many important community leaders and business firms left the city never to return. Security of life and business was doubtful in Memphis after the combined effects of the epidemic and the depression. The deplorable economic situation from 1873 to 1878 was further aggravated by the pre-war extravagance and post-war financing at tremendously disadvantageous discounts, which must now be paid or refunded.

The paralysis of economic life was reflected in school administration. The city tax for education was cut from $.30 to $.10 on the $100 evaluation. Many people refused to pay taxes, and by 1878, one-third of all property had been confiscated by the state. The amount of revenue turned over to the school board by the city was barely sufficient to provide for administrative expenses. The city found itself unable, in spite of the law, to support further the school building program, and for fifteen years, no new school buildings were erected. For the first time, public education suffered attack, by a well organized minority of business and propertied classes, as being a social luxury. They attacked the extravagance of high salaries, especially that paid to the superintendent. They proclaimed the high school a luxury, and the office of principal totally unnecessary. They maintained that the fundamentals were all that the public treasury should bear. Factional differences appeared in the board pertaining to all of the issues involved. A progressive superintendent was exchanged for a conservative one. The office of principal was practically abolished. The high school was retained, but its course of study was reduced from four to three years. So drastic were

the reductions imposed that practically all men except the superintendent and the secretary withdrew from the system.

The efforts of the community from 1873 to 1878 to preserve and to reclaim its culture from the double scourge of epidemic and depression were soon rendered useless. One of the worst urban epidemics in American history occurred in August, 1878. With this second fatal epidemic,the "Heroic Age" of Memphis came to an end. A new type of citizenry entered the picture and contributed to the building of a new Memphis.

The old city possessed a cosmopolitan outlook. Its population being heterogeneous, the city had a national outlook on national problems with most minority viewpoints represented. In spite of its "filth," "viciousness," and debts, it looked hopefully to the future for the solution of all of its ills through its predestined growth and importance. The "new city" possessed a provincial outlook. Most of those who deserted the city in 1878 never returned. The city developed a national reputation for repudiated debts, exorbitant taxes, and perilous epidemics. Northern and Eastern capital, as well as immigration, by-passed Memphis for more promising locations. Immigration to the "new city" came largely from the region of which Memphis was the center, namely, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Tennessee. Except for two classes of society, Negroes and southern whites, the population became homogeneous. Between 1880 and 1900,the foundations of this modern community were laid with conservative hands.

At a previous period, the schools had to wait upon the installation of those municipal improvements which would guarantee attractive returns from the accelerated flow of trade and commerce. Now, they must wait upon the installation of those hygienic improvements which in urban congestion make possible the survival of physical life. For twenty-five years after 1880, most of the taxes of Memphis had to go into a sewer system, a drainage system, a water system, garbage collection, and into the refunded debts of the "old city." For the schools, this was a period of status quo. The office of assistant superintendent was abolished, the office of principal was degraded to the position of head teacher, supervisors disappeared, curriculum revision and in-service training of teachers disappeared from the records, and attendance in the Negro schools was not urged and the system was neglected. One notable achievement, however, was wrought between

1889 and 1900. Six brick schoolhouses were constructed, one for Negroes and five for white children.

By 1900,the foundations of the "new city" were firmly laid. For the first time in history, its future was assured. Between 1880 and 1945, the city's population increased from 33,592 to over 300,000, its taxable wealth from $25,000,000 to over $300,000,000, its area from about 10 square miles to over 50 square miles, and its school enrollment from about 5,000 to over 45,000. Modern engineering science has been utilized to pave its streets and boulevards, to provide a pure and adequate artesian water supply, to encase its bayous in subterranean aqueducts, to install a modern sewer system, to create a functional board of health and municipal hospitals, to design and erect its public buildings, and to serve the community with municipally owned public utilities.

The physical and technological development since 1900 has been integrated with the growth of social institutions in aesthetic, religious, and intellectual spheres. The modern school system of Memphis dates practically from 1900. The city tax rates for schools increased from $.20 to $.65 on the $100 evaluation and the school income rose from $227,670 to $3,276,211. Forty-nine new school buildings were added to the system and most of these have been increased in size by subsequent additions. Another year was added to the course of study making it twelve years in length. Supervision by supervisors was reintroduced. The curriculum was significantly broadened, especially at the upper grade level. Finally, professional control of the schools was achieved.

Most American cities in the North, Northeast, and Northwest experienced their period of rapid growth soon after the Civil War, between 1870 and 1890. On the contrary, this period of urban prosperity was, in Memphis, one of desolation and ruins, resulting from the aftermath of debts, war, and plague. Starting tardily, in 1900, in the urban march of progress it now has reached that point in commercial development where the impact of new demands of society are becoming evident and the guiding agents in cultural development must soon meet and solve those problems of society which call for an extension of public school services. Many cities in America comparable to Memphis in size and wealth have expanded their public school system to embrace a system of

kindergarten training, to include the completion of general education at the junior college level, and to provide an adequate program of instruction for exceptional children, and to offer a program of education for adults. These services should gradually be embraced in the municipal program of public education as the funds to finance them can be made available.

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